MARTIN HEIDEGGER

(1) WHAT IS METAPHYSICS? (1929)

(2) POSTSCRIPT TO "WHAT IS METAPHYSICS" (1949 [1943])

(3) INTRODUCTION TO "WHAT IS METAPHYSICS?:

GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF METAPHYSICS (1949)

TRANSLATED BY

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TRANSLATOR’S INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Translations of Heidegger are usually not good English, but they can be. It is, of course, impossible to reconfigure German as English since German formations follow rules of sense and nonsense that are different from English formations. But it is possible to bring Heidegger over into English.

Heidegger is colloquial, idiomatic and playful. His German is steeped in literature, especially in the authors who transformed and enriched the German language: Meister Eckhart, Luther, Goethe, Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Hölderlin. Heidegger sometimes gives leeway to assonance for clues about words formed on the same root. He builds with echoes and then plays on the linguistic structures disclosed, which reveal the sense embedded in the words.

Reading Heidegger in German, we accompany his discoveries of sense in the German language. His means of unfolding meaning in the German language can often be applied to other languages, such as English, where the new language can be freed for its own playfulness, poetry and idioms.

I have never felt that Heidegger was unclear or deliberately obscure. He wrote a great deal and, I suspect, fluently. Then, returning to what he had written, a week later or decades later, he discovered what he had been given by language. He would then rewrite, emend, gloss, edit, qualify, expand what he had written.

In this translation I do not hope to solve Heidegger's ambiguities or explain them away. I only want to translate the ambiguities expressed in German into ambiguities expressed in English.

The three texts translated below are separated from each other by fourteen and six years, respectively. On July 24, 1929, Heidegger gave his inaugural lecture "What Is Metaphysics?" to the combined faculties of the University of Freiburg. He wrote a postscript to this "letter" to his colleagues for the fourth edition of the publication of the lecture in 1943. For the fifth edition (1949) he added an introduction to the lecture,

entitled "Getting to the Bottom of Metaphysics [Der Rückgang in den Grund der Metaphysik]."

Though published together in logical order (introduction, lecture, postscript), Heidegger also presented them chronologically in his anthology *Frontier Markers [Wegmarken]* beginning in 1967. The order of presentation there makes more sense, since as the title of Heidegger's book indicates, each text marks having reached a new frontier in his thinking. By contrast, his other anthology *Dead Ends [Holzwege]* indicates experiments in thinking that were in a certain sense blind alleys.

Heidegger describes the postscript as a preface or foreword. In that sense it should come first, followed by the introduction, as is the custom in the format of a book. Or perhaps the postscript should bring us back to the lecture itself. The order of reading would then be introduction, lecture, postscript, and lecture again.

For Heidegger, an introduction such as his "Introduction into Metaphysics" from 1935 or "Getting to the Bottom of Metaphysics" has pedagogical significance, but like the introduction in a piece of classical music, it is designed to bring the listener into the world of the main theme. It serves to set the mood for the piece.

I have translated the three frontier markers translated grouped around the lecture "What Is Metaphysics?" in the order of composition. The postscript was revised for the fifth edition (1949) of the lecture. In an earlier English translation, published that year, the unrevised postscript was the basis for the translation. The present translation is based on the *Gesamtausgabe* edition of *Wegmarken* (Volume 9, 1976) and so includes marginal notes gleaned from Heidegger's copies of the various editions of his lecture.

The order of composition of the three essays which follow was lecture (1929), postscript (1943, rev. 1949), and introduction (1949). Nonetheless, I am presenting them as Heidegger did beginning with the fourth edition (1943) of the lecture. In *Wegmarken*, they are presented chronologically in order of composition.[1]

1In a note to the first publication in French of a translation of the Introduction ("La Remonté au

All citations are to the *Gesamtausgabe* edition of *Wegmarken* (1976) (Frankfurt: Klostermann): "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" [= EWM and page number], pp. 365-383; "Was ist Metaphysik?" [= WM and page number], pp. 103-122]; and "Nachwort zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" [=NWM and page number], pp. 303-312.

What Is Metaphysics? The lecture was presented to the faculties of the University of Freiburg on July 24, 1929 as Heidegger's inaugural address. It was first translated by R.F.C. Hull and Alan Crick in 1949 and published in *Existence and Being*, a collection of Heidegger's essays edited by Werner Brock (Chicago: Henry Regnery), pp. 325-349. The lecture and postscript (1943 version) have been reprinted since 1975 in the revised and expanded edition of Walter Kaufmann's *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre* (New York: New American Library), pp. 242-257. A second translation of only the lecture, by David Krell, was published in *Basic Writings* (1977) New York: Harper and Row (expanded edition, 1993), pp. 93-110.

Postscript to 'What Is Metaphysics?' The postscript was published with the fourth edition (1943) of the lecture. In this version, it was included with the Hull/Crick translation of the, ibid., pp.349-361, and in Kaufmann, ibid., pp. 257-264. Heidegger revised the postscript for the fifth edition (1949). That version is translated below.

Introduction to 'What Is Metaphysics?'. Getting to the Bottom of Metaphysics The introduction was written in 1949 and published with the lecture and revised postscript. It first appeared in a translation by Walter Kaufmann, in 1956, in *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre* (revised edition [1975], pp. 265-279).

Fondement de la Métaphysique"), the translator, Joseph Rovan observes that the Introduction "est conçu comme une préface à une postface [was conceived as a preface to a postscript]" to the lecture. *Fontaine* (Paris) 10, #58, March 1947, p. 888.

INTRODUCTION TO "WHAT IS METAPHYSICS?"

GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF METAPHYSICS (1949)[2]

Descartes wrote to [Claude] Picot[3], who translated the *Principia Philosophiae* into French: "Ainsi toute la Philosophie est comme un arbre, dont les racines sont la Métaphysique, le tronc est la Physique, et les branches qui sortent de ce tronc toutes les autres sciences . . .."[4]

Staying with this image, we ask, in what soil [Boden][5] do the roots of the tree of philosophy find their

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2 Another possible version of the subtitle is "The Nothing at the Heart of Metaphysics." The adjective 'rückgängig' can mean "null and void" [nichtig]. Thus the subtitle suggests that the ground of metaphysics is no-thing [das Nichts], which is the message of the lecture. For this translation of 'das Nichts', see the lecture. Notes preceded by (*) are Heidegger's marginalia gleaned from his copies of the various editions of the lecture.

3 Heidegger's citation is to René Descartes, *Oeuvres*, edited by Charles Adam and Paul Tannery (Paris: Vrin, 1971 [1897-1910]), Volume IX,2, p. 14. Descartes' letter to Abbé Picot constitutes his introduction to the *Principia* in Picot's translation. For information on Picot, see Descartes' *Correspondance*, Volume V (1947) Paris: Presses Universaires de France, pp. 402-404. The current translation, by John Cottingham, of the "Preface" is in John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff and Dugald Murdoch (eds.), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes* (1985) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Volume I, p. 186.

4 "Thus the whole of philosophy is like a tree, whose roots are metaphysics, the trunk of which is physics, and the branches which extend out from that trunk are the rest of the sciences."

5 In this translation, frequent interpolation of the original German terms will be made. Sometimes an entire sentence will be given in a footnote. Other times, a variant rendering will

support? From what ground[6] do the roots and the tree as a whole receive their vital nourishment and strength? What element, utterly hidden, controls the supporting and nourishing roots of the tree? What lies buried and is active in the essence [Wesen][7] of metaphysics? What does metaphysics look like at bottom? What is metaphysics at bottom after all?

It thinks of be-ing [das Seiende][8] as be-ing. Wherever it is asked what be-ing is, be-ing as such is in view.

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be given, again in a footnote. This procedure is often decried as interfering with the flow of the text. It is doubtful than anyone reading the text will regret not having to turn back to the original German, especially when its inclusion strengthens the attempt to understand Heidegger's meaning. Besides, the study of Heidegger's texts requires and repays the labor of long reflection on the play of language in them.

6 Heidegger will play on two senses of 'Grund': the soil in and out of which living things grow and the basis or grounds or reasons for something, presented as evidence for coming to a certain decision about it. I will translate 'Grund' with "ground," "grounds," "basis" or even "at the heart of." "In den Grund" is rendered "at bottom." The phrase "Grund und Boden" is translated as "earth" or "land," the earth one farms or tends. "Grund und Boden" also functions idiomatically to mean "utterly." "Im Grunde" becomes "at the heart of," "fundamentally," "really," or "at (the) bottom (of)."

7 Sometimes 'Wesen' is translated "nature."

8 By 'das Seiende' Heidegger has in mind effective actuality, real "goings on" of any kind, in contrast with the "nothing going on" of no-thing [das Nichts].

Metaphysical formulating [Vorstellen][9] owes this view to the light*[10] of *be*[ing] [Sein].[11] The light itself (what such thinking experiences as light, that is) no longer comes into view in this thinking, because it presents be-ing always and only with respect to be-ing. In view of this, metaphysical thinking certainly asks about an actual [seienden] source and creator [Urheber] of the light. From this alone it is evident enough that every perspective grants a view [Durchsicht] of be-ing.

However be-ing may be explained, whether as spirit [Geist] in the sense of spirituality [Spiritualismus], as

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9 An important theme of the Introduction is how asking a question [eine Frage zu vorstellen] has become, in metaphysics, formulating, designating, proposing, making suppositions and apodeictic assertions [Vorstellungen], professing, representing (that is, or presenting something a second time and therefore in a second version), assigning meanings -- rather than letting those meaning emerge on their own. To formulate or designate as metaphysics does is to affirm as incontrovertibly true, almost as a confession of faith. In professing, metaphysics also invariably promotes what it proposes. It seeks to further itself and what it puts forward. By contrast, teaching, like poetic speaking, is quite different from professing. The phenomenological ideal, we recall, is knowledge *without* belief.

10 Heidegger's marginal notes in his copies of the various editions of the lecture are included in the *Gesamtausgabe* edition of *Wegmarken*. They will be cited with edition number.

*Fifth edition (1949): "Lichtung [illuminating]." (EWM 365) The term "light" is used in the phrase "in light of."

11 With this term, Heidegger announces the 'be-' ['das Sein'] in 'be-ing' ['das Seiende'], that is, the 'Sei-' (root) of 'das Seiende'. I choose the form '*be*[ing]' to underscore how awkward this must come to sound. This linguistic contraption is meant to give pause. I pronounce it 'be'. In a certain way, the bare infinitive 'be' has been the most questionable matter for Heidegger's thinking.

becoming [Werden] and being alive [Leben], as formulation [Vorstellung], as will [Wille], as substance [Substanz], as subject [Subjekt], as *energeia*, or as the eternal return of the equivalent [ewige Wiederkehr des Gleichen][12], be-ing appears as be-ing each time in light of *be*[ing]. Whenever metaphysics formulates be-ing, it has there shed light on *be*[ing]. *Be*[ing] has arrived with[in] emergence [Unverborgenheit] (᾿Αλήθεια).[13] Whether and how *be*[ing] brings such emergence with it, whether and how it brings itself along*[14] into and as metaphysics in the first place remains obscure. *Be*[ing] is not thought in its disclosing nature [entbergenden Wesen], that is, in its truth. Nevertheless, in its answer to the question about be-ing as such, metaphysics speaks out of an unnoticed obviousness [Offenbarkeit] of *be*[ing]. We can therefore call the truth of *be*[ing] the ground in which metaphysics as the root of the tree of philosophy is supported, by means of which it is nourished.

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12 For this translation of 'die Gleiche', see my essay "Who Is Heidegger's Nietzsche," a review article of the English translations of Heidegger's *Nietzsche* (1960).

13 The sense is of something stepping out of the shadows or coming out of seclusion and being turned over to someone after having been in hiding. As ᾿Αλήθεια, emergence is determined as having been deprived or relieved of forgetfulness (λήθη) by *be*[ing]. Perhaps "emergedness" would work here.

14 *Fifth edition (1949): "An-bringen: Gewähren die Unverborgenheit und in dieser Unverborgenes, Anwesendes. Im Anwesen verbirgt sich: An-bringen von Unverborgenheit, die Anwesendes answesen läßt. 'das Sein selbst' ist das Sein in seiner Wahrheit, welche Wahrheit zum Sein gehört, d.h. in welche Wahrheit 'Sein' entschwindet [bringing along: affording / granting of emergence, and in this emerging, apprésenting (making present to). In apprésenting is hidden the bringing along of emergence, which apprésenting lets itself apprésent. '*Be*[ing] itself' is *be*[ing] in its truth, truth which belongs to *be*[ing], that is, truth in which '*be*[ing]' vanishes]." (EWM 366)

Because metaphysics questions be-ing as be-ing, it is left to be-ing and does not turn to *be*[ing] as *be*[ing]. As the root of the tree, it sends nourishment and strength out into its trunk and branches. A root branches out into the land [Grund und Bogen] and so, for the good of the tree, goes out of it and thus can take leave of it. The tree of philosophy grows out of the rootbed of metaphysics. The earth in fact is the element in which the root of the tree comes to be [west][15], but the growth of the tree is never able to absorb the rootbed so that it disappears as something tree-like[16] in the tree. Instead, the roots lose themselves in a thickset knot of fibers in the soil. The ground is ground for the root which for the good of the tree forgets itself in it. But the root still belongs to the tree, even though in its own way it commits itself to the element of the soil. It uses up [verschwindet] its element and itself in this [element]. As a root, it does not care about the soil, at least not in such wise that it would appear to be its nature to grow solely in that element and spread out only through it. Presumably, this element would not be the element it is were it not that the root weaves its way through it.

Metaphysics, insofar as it always formulates be-ing as be-ing, does not think about [denkt nicht an] *be*[ing] itself. Philosophy does not focus on its basis [auf ihren Grund].*[17] In fact, in metaphysics, it always abandons it. But nevertheless it never escapes it. If thinking sets out to experience the basis of metaphysics, to the extent that such thinking tries to think the truth of *be*[ing] itself instead of only formulating be-ing as be-ing, it has in a certain way abandoned metaphysics. Seen from the perspective of metaphysics, such thinking goes back to the basis of metaphysics. But what thus still appears to be the basis, the essence of metaphysics, presumably because it is experienced from out of itself as

15 The verb 'wesen' will be translated as "to come to be" or "to come to pass." What 'west' arrives precisely in order to pass on; it never "is" in the sense of the verbs 'εἶναι', '*esse*', and '(to) be', all of which imply some kind of fixity or stasis. 'Wesen' also connotes "being brought to pass."

16 That is, as something philosophical . . .

17 *Fifth edition (1949): "Sein und Grund: das Selbe [*Be*[ing] and basis: the same]." (EWM 367)

something else and unspoken, is, accordingly, also something other than metaphysics.

Thinking which thinks about the truth of *be*[ing] is not satisfied with metaphysics, of course, but neither does it think against metaphysics. Figuratively speaking, it does not "uproot" the root of philosophy; it digs into its ground and ploughs its land. Metaphysics continues to be first philosophy [das Erste der Philosophie]. First thinking [Das Erste des Denkens] is not attained.[18] Metaphysics is gotten over [überwunden] in thinking about the truth of *be*[ing]. The claim of metaphysics to govern the relationship to *"be*[ing]" and definitively to determine every relation to be-ing as such becomes invalid. But this "getting over metaphysics" doesn't get rid of metaphysics. As long as man is the *animal rationale*, he is the *animal metaphysicum*. As long as man understands himself as a reasonable living thing [Lebewesen], metaphysics, in Kant's words, belongs to the nature [Natur] of man.[19] On the other hand, if it is successful in getting back to the basis of metaphysics, thinking might well also occasion a change in the essence of man, a change which brings along with it a transformation of metaphysics.

18 First philosophy or authentic philosophy, πρώτη φιλοσοφία, philosophy in the primary sense, which Heidegger wants to ground. Metaphysics is also being characterized here as the beginning of philosophy. First thinking, a play on πρώτη φιλοσοφία, is more basic than first philosophy, i.e., metaphysics.

19 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Second Edition, 1787), translated by Norman Kemp Smith [1929] New York: St. Martin's Press (1965), p. 56. " . . . metaphysics actually exists, if not as a science, yet still as a natural disposition [Metaphysik ist, wenn gleich nichts als Wissenschaft, doch als Naturanlage] (*metaphysica naturalis*)." (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, in *Gesammelte Schriften* (1911), Band III, Berlin: Reimer, p. 41 [B 21].) In Kant's *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics that Can Qualify as Science* (1783), translated by Paul Carus [1902], New York: Open Court (1988), metaphysics had also been referred to as a "natural tendency" of man (p. 135). (*Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Band IV, p. 363.)

If, therefore, in the development of the question about the truth of *be*[ing], we speak about getting over metaphysics, this means keeping *in mind* *be*[ing] itself. Such keeping in mind goes beyond what heretofore has been *not* thinking [das Nichtdenken] about the ground of the root of philosophy. The thinking attempted in *Being and Time* (1927) set out on a path to prepare for getting over metaphysics so understood. However, the one who sets such thinking on its way can only be what is itself to be [doing the] thinking [das zu Denkende selbst].*[20] That and how only *be*[ing] itself comes to thinking is never only or at first the say of thinking. That and how *be*[ing] itself affects thinking brings thinking to the verge of arising from *be*[ing] itself in order to be in accord with *be*[ing] as such.*[21]

But then when is such getting over metaphysics necessary? Should the one discipline in philosophy that until now has been its root be merely undermined and supplanted in this way by one that is more original? Is it a question of a change in the doctrinal system of philosophy? No. Or, by getting to the bottom of metaphysics, shall an until now overlooked precondition of philosophy be uncovered, and it be settled that it does not yet stand on an unshakable foundation and therefore cannot at this point be an unconditional science? No.

The arrival or non-arrival on the scene of the truth of *be*[ing] is about something else: not the constitution of philosophy, not just philosophy itself, but rather the nearness [Nähe] and distance of that from which philosophy, as the formulating thinking of be-ing as such, gets its essence and necessity. It has yet to be decided whether *be*[ing] itself, in relationship to the essence of man, can*[22] come into its own out of its own truth, or whether metaphysics, in its estrangement from its basis, denies as in days gone by that the

20 *Fifth edition (1949): "was *heißt* Denken [what *do* we call thinking]?" (EWM 368) Variant: What cries out to be thought?

21 *Fifth edition (1949): "Ereignis [event / (the) coming into its own / enownment]." (EWM 368)

22 *Fifth edition (1949): "Brauch [customary usage]." (EWM 369)

relationship of *be*[ing] to the essence of man comes from the essence of this relationship itself which man plays out [zum Gehören bringt] with *be*[ing].[23]

Metaphysics has already formulated *be*[ing] beforehand in its answer to the question about be-ing as such. It necessarily speaks of *be*[ing], and continually of that. But metaphysics does not put *be*[ing] itself into words, since it does not consider either *be*[ing] in its truth or truth as emergence, and this in its essence.*[24] The essence of truth[25] appears to metaphysics only in the already derived form of the truth of knowledge and statements about that. But emergence might just be what is more original [Anfänglicheres] than truth in the sense of *veritas*.*[26] ̓Αλήθεια might just be the word that gives an as yet unexperienced glimpse into the unthought essence of *esse* [be]. If this should be so, then, admittedly, the formulating thinking of metaphysics could never arrive at that essence of truth, no matter how keenly it

23 Man and *be*[ing] perform the relationship in two-part counterpoint. I think of Bach's two-part fugues or his *Praeambula* (*Inventionen*). *Be*[ing] calls the tune, man sings it. *Be*[ing] sounds the ground bass with which man harmonizes and against which he plays the melody. This *Bezug* [relationship] is the *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis) [Contributions about Philosophy (On the Event)*] (1936-38), *Gesamtausgabe* 65 (1989) Frankfurt: Klostermann.

24 *Fifth edition (1949): "entbergende bergende Ge-währnis als Ereignis [discovering hiding warranty as event / enownment]." (EWM 369)

25 See the essay of the same name, first published in 1930, in *Wegmarken*, pp. 177-202, and in the translations by R.F.C. Hull and Alan Crick, in *Existence and Being* (1949) Washington: Regnery Gateway, 1988, pp. 292-324, and by John Sallis, in *Basic Writings* (1977) San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco (rev. ed., 1993), pp. 111-138.

26 *Fifth edition (1949): "Veritas bei Thomas immer *in intellectu*, und sei der *intellectus divinus* [*veritas* according to Thomas Aquinas is always *in intellectu* (in the mind), and is the *intellectus divinus* (mind of God)]." (EWM 369)

might look historically into pre-Socratic philosophy, for it is not a question of some renaissance of pre-Socratic philosophy (it would be vain and nonsensical to have something like that in mind) but rather of paying attention to the arrival of the as yet unspoken essence of emergence as what *be*[ing] has announced itself to be.*[27] In the meantime, metaphysics harbors the truth of *be*[ing] throughout its history from Anaximander to Nietzsche. Why doesn't metaphysics think about it? Is the omitting of such thinking just part of the nature [Art] of metaphysical thinking? Or does it belong to the fate of the essence of metaphysics that it draws away from its own basis, because in the realization [Aufgehen] of emergence what is coming to pass [Wesende] in it, namely, hiddenness [Verborgenheit],*[28] always fails to appear, in favor, as it happens, of what is emerging [das Unverborgenen] emerging just so as to be able to appear as be-ing?

But now metaphysics continually and in the most various ways speaks about *be*[ing]. It alone gives and reinforces the appearance of asking and answering the question about *be*[ing]. But metaphysics never answers the question about the truth of *be*[ing] because it does not ask the question. It doesn't ask because it only has *be*[ing] in mind [denkt] while it formulates be-ing as be-ing. It means be-ing as a whole [im Ganzen] but speaks of *be*[ing]. It names it *be*[ing] but means be-ing as be-ing. From beginning to end, the statements of metaphysics move in a strange sort of way in a general mix-up*[29] about be-ing

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27 *Fifth edition (1949): "Sein, Wahrheit, Welt, , Ereignis [*be*[ing], truth, world, [], event / enownment]." (EWM 369) " refers to 'Sein' not vocalized, unenunciated.

28 *Fifth edition (1949): "Λήθη als Verbergung [forgetting as hiding]." (EWM 370) (In EWM, there is a misprint of the spelling of Λήθη.)

29 *Fifth edition (1949): "Verwechslung : die Gebundenheit in das Hinüber zu Sein und das Herüber zu Seiendem. Eines steht stets *im* anderen und *für* das andere, 'Auswechslung', 'Wechsel', bald so, bald so [mix-up: being caught up in crossing over to *be*[ing] and crossing back to be-ing. The one is always *in* the other and *for* the other, 'exchange', 'changeover / alteration', now this way, now that]." (EWM 370)

and *be*[ing]. Admittedly, we think of the mix-up as an eventuality [Ereignis] and not as a mishap.[30] In no way could it have its basis in mere thoughtlessness or hastiness of speaking. Accordingly, thanks to this general mix-up, formulating attains the height of confusion [Verwirrung] when one claims that metaphysics poses the question about *be*[ing] [Seinsfrage].[31]

It seems almost as though metaphysics, in the way it thinks be-ing, were without knowing it thereby shown to be the barrier that denies man the original*[32] relationship of *be*[ing] to the essence of man [zum Menschenwesen].

But what if the nonoccurrence [Ausbleiben] of this relationship and the forgottenness of this nonoccurrence were to determine the entire modern age? What if the nonoccurrence of *be*[ing] leaves man ever more exclusively in the hands of be-ing, so that man almost abandons the relationship of *be*[ing] to his essence (man's essence), and this abandonment at the same time remains hidden? What if this were the case, and has been so for a long time now? What if there were now indications that

30 This is a revealing use of the fundamental term in Heidegger's vocabulary, 'Ereignis'. In this passage, an 'Ereignis' is contrasted with a 'Fehler'. A 'Fehler' is a mishap or mistake or accident, which comes unexpectedly, while an 'Ereignis' is an event that is bound to happen. It may have been planned or hoped for, as in the usage when 'Ereignis' refers to the birth of a child.

31 The various combinations beginning with the morpheme 'Sein-' will be translated with either "of *be*[ing]," by *be*[ing]," "of and by *be*[ing]," or "about *be*[ing]." In every case, Heidegger sees the "action" of *be*[ing] in counterpoint with the other element of the term; for example, in ' -verständnis', ' -verlassenheit', ' -vergessenheit', or ' -geschick', *be*[ing] is both the source and destination of the 'understanding', 'abandonment', 'forgottenness', or 'venture'.

32 *Fifth edition (1949): "Das an-fangende, im An-fangen wesende Ereignis -- brauchend -- die Enteignis [the originating, at the outset présenting eventuality -- having use of (needing) -- dispossession (dépassement)." (EWM 370)

henceforth this forgottenness is preparing for an even more decided forgottenness?

Would there still be reason for someone thinking in such a way to comport himself arrogantly in the face of this venture [Geschick] of *be*[ing]? Would there still be any reason to be led to believe in something else with such abandonment of and by *be*[ing] [Seinsverlassenheit], and this entirely out of a self-induced haughty mood? If that is the way it is with the forgottenness of *be*[ing] [Seinsvergessenheit], would this not be reason enough for thinking which thinks about *be*[ing] to consequently become horrified at not being able to do anything but endure in dread this venture by *be*[ing], in order to bring thinking of the forgottenness of *be*[ing] to resolution for the first time? But how would thinking be able to do this, as long as the dread consigned to it is only a kind of depressed mood [gedrückte Stimmung]? What does the venture of this dread by *be*[ing] have to do with psychology and psychoanalysis?

But suppose getting over metaphysics corresponded to efforts to pay attention for once to the forgottenness of *be*[ing], in order to experience it and incorporate the experience into the relationship of *be*[ing] to man and look after it there, then the question "What is metaphysics?", in distress [Not] about the forgottenness of and by *be*[ing], would perhaps go on being what is most necessary in what is necessary for thinking.

It thus means everything that thinking become more thoughtful in its own time. That comes about when, instead of exerting a greater degree of effort, thinking points to another origin. Thinking that is posited by be-ing as such and is formulated and illuminated by it then, comes to be replaced by thinking that comes into its own from *be*[ing] itself and in that way belongs to *be*[ing].

All efforts are at a loss that try to see how what is and remains only metaphysical formulating is immediately to be put into action in a more effective and useful way in ordinary everyday life [Leben]. For the more thoughtful thinking becomes, the more appropriately it is fulfilled by the relationship of *be*[ing] to it, the more purely thinking really comes on its own to behave in a way that is appropriate only to it in

thinking of what is destined for it [des ihm Zu-gedachten]*[33] and therefore of what has already been thought of [Gedachten].[34]

But who still recalls what has been thought of?[35] People think things up. To get thinking on a path so that, in relationship with *be*[ing] it gets to the essence of man, to open a pathway for thinking expressly to consider *be*[ing] in its truth*[36] is what the thinking of *Being and Time* is "about [unterwegs]." In this way, and that means in the service of the question of the truth of *be*[ing], reflection on the essence of man becomes necessary, since the unspoken because still to be accomplished experience of the forgottenness of *be*[ing] includes the all-important suspicion that, in consequence of the emergence of *be*[ing], the relationship of human nature [Menschenwesen] to *be*[ing] indeed belongs to *be*[ing] itself. Yet how could such surmising as is experienced here ever even become an explicit question without already having made every effort beforehand to eliminate the determination of the essence of man as subjectivity [Subjektivität] and also as *animal rationale*? In order at the same time to find *one* word for the relationship

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33 Variant: . . . what one is to have thought . . ..

*Fifth edition (1949): "Zu-gesagten, Ge-währten, Ereigneten [what is to have been said, what has been afforded / brought forth, what has eventuated / been brought into its own / come to pass]."

34 In that event, what is thought of (remembered) and what is thought about coincide.

35 "Doch wer denkt noch an Gedachtes?" (EWM 372) Variant: To whom does it occur to think about what has already been thought about? The point is that most people are sure that everything worth thinking about has already been thought through thoroughly enough, especially such matters as what counts as worth thoughtful reflection, *was heißt Denken*.

36 *Fifth edition (1949): "Wahrnis als Ereignis [observance as eventuality]." (EWM 372) 'Wahrnis' is thus being considerate of, looking after, observing (as one would an anniversary or religious feast) the truth of *be*[ing].

of be[ing] to the essence of man and for the essential relation [Wesensverhältnis] of man to the openness ["there [Da]"] of *be*[ing] as such, the term "existence [Dasein]" was chosen for that essential sphere in which man is man. This happened even though the term is also used by metaphysics for what has come to be called *existentia* [being][37], actuality [Wirklichkeit], reality [Realität] and objectivity [Objektivität], and although the everyday way of speaking [in German] about "menschliche Dasein [human existence]" makes use of the metaphysical meaning of the word. But every rethinking [Nach-denken] of it is obstructed, though, if one feels satisfied in finding out that in *Being and Time* the word 'existence' is used instead of 'consciousness [Bewußtsein]'. As if it were here merely a matter of the employment of a different usage of words, as if it were not about the one and only [thing that matters]: to bring about thinking through the relationship of *be*[ing] to the essence of man and thus, to our way of thinking, [to] above all [bring about] what is for our leading question an adequate essential experience of man. 'Existence' neither merely takes the place of the word 'consciousness', nor does that "thing [Sache]" called "existence" take the place of what we formulate in the term 'consciousness'. Moreover, what is termed "existence" should first of all be experienced and consequently then thought of as a "place [Stelle]," namely, the habitat of the truth of *be*[ing].

What is thought in the term 'existence' throughout the treatise on *Being and Time* is already given in the principle that says: "*The 'essence' of existence lies in its life [Existenz]*" (p. 67).[38]

Admittedly, if one considers that in the language of metaphysics the term 'existence [Existenz]' itself names what 'existence [Dasein]' means, namely, the actuality of anything that is actual [jedes beliebigen Wirklichen], from God to a grain of sand, then the difficulty of thinking [des zu Denkende] the principle when one only casually understands it is displaced from the term "Dasein" onto the term "Existenz." In

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37 According to the entry 'essence' in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd. ed., 1989), the word 'essentia' is a "fictitious present participle of *esse*, to be, in imitation of Greek οὐσία."

38 *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (1962) Oxford: Basil Blackwell [= *Sein und Zeit*, *Gesamtausgabe* 2, p. 55].

Being and Time the word 'life [Existenz]' is used expressly as the expression for the *be*[ing] of man. Correctly thought, "life" may be thought of as the "essence" of existence in whose openness *be*[ing] manifests and hides itself, affords and withdraws itself [sich bekündet und verbirgt, gewährt und entzieht], without the truth of *be*[ing] exhausting itself in existence or letting itself be at one with it after the fashion of the metaphysical principle that all objectivity as such is subjectivity.

What is the meaning of 'life' in *Being and Time*? The term names a way of *be*[ing] [Weise des Seins], in fact the *be*[ing] of that [kind of] be-ing [Seiende] which stands open[ly] for the openness of *be*[ing], within which it stands while it withstands [aussteht] it. This withstanding [Ausstehen] is gone through in the name of "sorrow [Sorge]."[39] The ecstatic [ekstatische] essence of existence is thought of as sorrow, just as, conversely, sorrow is experienced adequately only in the ecstatic essence [of existence]. Experienced in this way, withstanding is here of the essence for thinking ekstasis.[40] The ecstatic essence of life is therefore still inadequately understood when one formulates it only as "standing beyond"[41] and takes the "beyond [Hinaus]" to be an "away from [Weg von]" the inside [Innern] of an immanence [Immanenz] of consciousness and spirit [Geist], for so understood life would in this way still be formulated as "subjectivity" and "substance," while the "out" as what is outside [Auseinander] the openness of *be*[ing] itself would have yet to be thought. Strange as it may sound, the stasis[42] in the ek-static has its basis in

39 "Dieses Ausstehen wird unter dem namen 'Sorge' erfahren." (EWM 374) Variants: This ek-stasis goes by the name of sorrow. It goes by the name (as an alias) sorrow. In English translations of *Being and Time* 'care' has been the alias of 'sorrow'. For an argument for the translation of 'Sorge' as "sorrow," see the Part Two of my book *Preparatory Thinking in Heidegger's Teaching* (1987) New York: Philosophical Library.

40 "Das so erfahrene Ausstehen ist das Wesen der hier zu denkenden Ekstasis." (EWM 374)

41 Variant: . . . standing apart from . . ..

42 The fundamental meaning of στάσις with which Heidegger is working in this passage is, of course, at play with ἔκστασις. στάσις here means one's position on a matter, while ἔκστασις

being an instance [Innestehen] of the "out" "there" [im "Aus" und "Da"] of emergence as which *be*[ing] itself comes to pass. What is to be thought by the term 'life' can very beautifully be termed "urgency [Inständigkeit],"[43] if the term is used in thinking to in this way think the truth of *be*[ing] and to think it through [ihr denkt aus]. But then in particular we must think the instance of the openness of *be*[ing], the bearing [Austragen][44] of such an instance (sorrow), and enduring [Ausdauern] in extremity [im Äußersten] (*be*[ing] to the utmost[45] [Sein zum Tode])*[46] all together [and] at the same time, and as the complete essence of life.*[47]

Be-ing in the mode of life is human [be-ing]. Only man exists.[48] A rock is, but it does not exist. A tree is, but it does not exist. A horse is, but it does not exist. An angel is, but it does not exist. God is, but he does not exist.[49] The statement that "only man exists" in no way means to say that only the human [kind

effects a change of position, changing of one's mind.

43 Or: "(em)ergency." Existence is nature's emergency situation. To be human is to be pressed of one's own doing to do things.

44 Or: . . . giving birth to . . ..

45 Or: . . . to the nth degree . . .; that is, to death.

46 *Fifth edition (1949): "Auf sich zu-kommen lassen den Tod, sich halten in der Ankunft des Todes als des Ge-Birgs des s [to leave it open for death to come to pass, to hold out for the arrival of death as the salvage of []]." (EWM 374)

47 *Fifth edition (1949): "Wohnen, das 'bauende' [living / dwelling, the 'cultivating' / 'growing']." (EWM 374)

48 Variants: Only man exists. Only the human kind of be-ing exists.

49 "Das Seiende, das in der Weise der Existenz ist, ist der Mensch. Der Mensch allein existiert. Der Fels ist, aber er existiert nicht. Der Baum ist, aber er existiert nicht. Das Pferd ist, aber es existiert nicht. Der Engel ist, aber es existiert nicht. Gott ist, aber er existiert nicht."

of] be-ing is real, and thus every other [kind of] be-ing is unreal and only a semblance [Schein] or idea [Vorstellung] for man. The statement that "man exists" means that man is the only [kind of] be-ing whose *be*[ing] is marked by *be*[ing] as the outstanding instance [offenstehende Innestehen] of the emergence of *be*[ing].[50] The*[51] existential essence [existentiale Wesen] of man is the basis of what man can formulate as be-ing of any sort and for what he can be conscious of that is so formulated. All consciousness presupposes life thought ecstatically as the *essentia* of man, where *essentia* means what man comes to be insofar as he is man. By contrast, consciousness neither first creates the openness of be-ing nor first confers on man his being open [Offensein] for be-ing. Whither and whence and in what open dimension, then, could all intentionality of consciousness move if man were in essence not already urgency? What else (if anyone has seriously thought about this) could the word '-sein' mean in the terms 'Bewußtsein' and 'Selbstbewußtsein [self-consciousness]' except the existential essence of what exists, which is that in which it exists? To be a self is, of course, the mark of the essence of the be-ing of the sort of thing that exists, but life neither consists in being a self [Selbstsein][52] nor is itself determined by this. However, since metaphysical thinking characterizes man's selfness as a substance, or what is at bottom the same,

(EWM 374)

I take the opening sentences of this paragraph to be essential to understanding Heidegger. The verb 'existieren' is reserved exclusively for the human kind of be-ing. Forms of 'sein' apply to everything else: things of nature, things fabricated by human beings, divine things. 'Existenz' is human life, the life of 'biography', the life that has, makes and is (a) history.

50 Human be-ing is notable "in the eyes of" *be*[ing]. We who exist, who can say "we" and therefore "we exist," are marked men, marked by the blaze of existence.

51 *Fifth edition (1949): "ereignet-gebrauchte [eventful-accustomed]." (EWM 375)

52 Or selfness*, as below.* Some of Heidegger's neologisms ending in '-sein' seem to have been inspired by the peculiar construction of the noun 'Bewußtsein', which literally means "knownness" or "what is to have been known." Thus 'Selbstsein' would mean "what is to be itself."

as subjectivity, the path that first leads away from metaphysics to the ecstatic-existential essence of man must get past the metaphysical determination of the selfness of man (*Being and Time* §§ 63 and 64).[53]

But now because the question about life always stands at the disposal of the sole question for thinking, namely, the first question has yet to be unfolded about the truth of *be*[ing] as the hidden basis of all metaphysics, the title of the treatise that attempts to get to the bottom of metaphysics is therefore not *Life and Time*, or *Consciousness and Time*, but *Being and Time*. Nor, however, let us think of the title as anything like the well-known [pairs] *be*[ing] and becoming, *be*[ing] and semblance,[54] *be*[ing] and thinking, *be*[ing] and having to [Sollen]. For there *be*[ing] is always designated narrowly exactly as if "becoming," "seeming," "thinking," and "having to" did not belong to *be*[ing], even though it is clear they still are not nothing [nichts] and so belong to *be*[ing]. In *Being and Time*, *be*[ing] is none other than "time," as long as "time" goes by its "first name [Vorname]"[55], the truth of *be*[ing], and is thus *be*[ing] itself. But now why "time" and "*be*[ing]"?

Thinking about the beginning of the history of *be*[ing] that reveals itself in the thinking of the Greeks will show that the Greeks early on experienced the *be*[ing] of be-ing as the presence of what is presenting itself [die Answesenheit des Anwesenden]. If we translate εἶναι with 'be', the translation is linguistically

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53 These are the sections entitled "Die für eine Interpretation des Seinssinnes der Sorge gewonnene hermeneutische Situation und der methodische Charakter der existenzialen Analytik überhaupt [The Kind of Hermeneutic Situation Reached for the Interpretation of the Sense of *Be*[ing] and the Methodological Character of the Existential Analytic in General]" and "Sorge und Selbstheit [Sorrow and Selfhood]." See *Being and Time*, pp. 358-370 [= *Sein und Zeit*, *Gesamtausgabe* 2, pp. 411-428].

54 Or: seeming, sembling.

55 The 'Vorname' is the given name of a person. Heidegger here suggests that "the truth of *be*[ing]" is the earliest name for time.

correct, but we merely replace one word [Wortlaut] with another. If we question ourselves, however, it immediately comes to light that we neither think εἶναι in a Greek way[56] nor, correspondingly, think "be" with a clear and unambiguous determination [Bestimmung]. What do we say, then, when we say "be" instead of εἶναι, and εἶναι and *esse* instead of "be"'? We *say* nothing.[57] The Greek, Latin and German words are all obtuse in the same way. In our customary usage, we give ourselves away as being merely trendsetters for the greatest thoughtlessness that has ever gone on in thinking and which remains in power to this very hour. For εἶναι means [to] make present [anwesen][58]. The essence of making present is buried deep in the original name for *be*[ing]. For us, however, εἶναι and οὐσία [(a) being] (as παρ- and ἀπουσία)[59] already say the following: in making present, the present and lasting, unthought and hidden, are at work; time is present. Accordingly, *be*[ing] as such is born of time.[60] Thus time is referred back to emergence, that is, [to] the truth of *be*[ing]. But the time to be thought of now is not experienced in some sort of outcome of [a kind of] be-ing. Time is obviously of a wholly different nature [Wesen]*[61], which is

56 That is, speaking Greek.

57 "Wir sagen nichts." (EWM 376) Variant: We don't really say anything at all.

58 Or: making a present (gift) of.

59 παρουσία means "presence" (with beings); ἀπουσία means absence (without any being).

60 "Sein als solches ist demnach unverborgen aus Zeit." (EWM 374) Variant: Accordingly, *be*[ing] as such comes (out) of time / (just) in (the nick of) time. *Be*[ing] is in and of time. Heidegger here implies a neologism 'unverbergen' used transitively.

61 *Fifth edition (1949): "Zeit ist vierdimensional: Die *erste*, alles versammelnde Dimension ist die *Nähe* [Time is four-dimensional: the *first*, all-encompassing dimension is *imminence*]." (EWM 377) A *fifth dimension* must be supposed to provide access to the other four: time, volume, surface, length. Or is this further dimension coincident with the pre-dimensional *point*? 'Nähe' means nearness *in time*, impendence (with a suggestion of danger), which is contrasted with what is long ago and far away, distant in time and difficult to regain. These extremes meet

not merely unthought of so far in the metaphysical concept of time, but will never be thought in it. Thus time becomes the first name of what still has to be considered about the truth of *be*[ing] and experienced for the first time.

Just as the hidden essence of time says something about the first metaphysical name for *be*[ing], so it also says something about its last name: "the eternal return of the equivalent." In the era [Epoche] of metaphysics*[62] the history of *be*[ing] is at work in the unthought of essence of time. This time is space, not co-ordinated, but also not merely ordered [eingeordnet].*[63]

Any attempt to get from formulating be-ing as such to thinking about the truth of *be*[ing] must in a certain way also formulate the truth of *be*[ing] in every formulating embarked upon, so that such formulating is necessarily different in kind from what is to be thought and, as formulating, ultimately inappropriate to it. The relationship of the truth of *be*[ing] to human nature [Menschenwesen] that derives from metaphysics is interpreted as "understanding." But that being the case, understanding is thought by [aus] the emergence of *be*[ing]. Inwardly begotten, it is what is given forth [Entwurf] ecstatically, that is, in the

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and have their origin for thinking in *be*[ing].

This Introduction drew out of Heidegger clarifications of a kind that are rare in his writings, let alone in the notes he made in his copies of his books. Heidegger's note at this point in the text provides a hint about the importance of the Introduction among Heidegger's ventures in thinking. A certain frontier is reached here, the view from which is powerfully evocative.

62 *Fifth edition (1949): "Diese Epoche ist die ganze Geschichte des Seins [This era is the whole history of *be*[ing]]." (EWM 377)

63 *Fifth edition (1949): "Zeit-Raum [time-space]." (EWM 377) That is, space is not conceived according to the schema of the three geometric co-ordinates.

sphere of the open.*[64] The sphere delivered up*[65] as open in begetting, by which something (in this case *be*[ing]) turns out to be something (in this case *be*[ing] as itself in its emergence), is called sense [Sinn]*[66] (cf. *Being and Time*, pp. 192-93)[67]. "Sense of *be*[ing]" and "truth of *be*[ing]" speak of the same thing.[68]

Assuming that time belongs to the truth of *be*[ing] in an as yet hidden way, then every begetting that keeps the truth of *be*[ing] open as the understanding of *be*[ing] has to look to time as the possible*[69] horizon [möglichen Horizont] of the understanding of and by *be*[ing] (cf. *Being and Time*, §§ 31-34 and 68).[70]

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64 "Es ist der ekstatische, d.h. im Bereich des Offenen innestehende geworfene Entwurf." (EWM 377)

*Fifth edition (1949): "Geworfenheit und Ereignis. Werfen, Zu-werfen, Schicken; Ent-Wurf: dem Wurf entsprechen [begottenness and eventuality. Begetting, expelling, sending; pro-geny: corresponding to the utterance]." (EWM 377)

65 *Fifth edition (1949): "sich zu-bringt [is brought to]." (EWM 377) That is, in the way a ship is "brought to" (turned into the wind).

66 *Fifth edition (1949): "Sinn -- Wegrichtung des Sach-Verhalts [sense -- setting the course of the fact of the matter]." (EWM 377)

67 *Sein und Zeit*, p. 201. The passage is part of Section 32, "Verstehen und Auslegung [Understanding and Explanation]." 'Auslegung' is displaying something, getting it out into the open, delivering oneself of it.

68 "'Sinn von Sein' und 'Wahrheit des Seins' sagen das Selbe." (EWM 377) 'Die Gleiche' is "the equivalent"; 'das Selbe' is "the same (thing)."

69 *Fifth edition (1949): "ermöglichen [possibilizing]." (EWM 378)

70 These are the sections entitled "Das Da-sein als Verstehen [*Being* There as Understanding],"

On the first page of *Being and Time* the preface of the treatise closes with the following sentences: "The intention of the following treatise is the concrete elaboration of the question about the sense of be*[ing]*. The interpretation of *time* as an exposing[71] of the possible horizon of any kind of understanding of *be*[ing] is its provisional goal."[72]

Philosophy cannot easily find clearer evidence for the power of the forgottenness of *be*[ing], in which all philosophy is immersed and which has at the same time become and continues to be the fateful claim of thinking in *Being and Time*, than the instinctive assurance with which it has by-passed the only real question of *Being and Time*. But this is not a question of misunderstandings regarding a book, but rather of our abandonment of and by *be*[ing].

"Verstehen und Auslegung [Understanding and Explanation]," "Die Aussage als abkünftiger Modus der Auslegung [The Statement (Proposition) as the Original Mode of Explanation]," "Da-sein und Rede. Die Sprache [*Being* There and Speech. Language]," and "Die Zeitlichkeit der Erschlossenheit überhaupt. a) Die Zeitlichkeit des Verstehens. (b) Die Zeitlichkeit der Befindlichkeit. c) Die Zeitlichkeit der Verfallens. d) Die Zeitlichkeit der Rede. [The Temporality of Openness. a) The Temporality of Understanding. b) The Temporality of Situatedness. c) The Temporality of Distractedness. d) The Temporality of Speech]," Being and Time, pp. 182-210, 384-401 [= *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 190-221, 444-463]. I have translated 'Da-sein' with "*being* there" when it is hyphenated.

71 Compared to 'Auslegung', which displays the obvious, 'Interpretation' exposes what lies hidden in a matter, exhumes it.

72 "Die konkrete Ausarbeitung der Frage nach dem Sinn von '*Sein*' ist die Absicht der folgenden Abhandlung. Die Interpretation der *Zeit* als des möglichen Horizontes eines jeden Seinsverständnisses überhaupt ist ihr vorläufiges Ziel."

Metaphysics speaks of what be-ing is as be-ing; it offers a λόγος (statement [Aussage]) about ὄν [be-ing]. The later term "ontology" indicates its essence, supposing, that is, that we interpret the term according to its own proper content and not in a narrow scholastic sense. Metaphysics moves in the realm of ὂν ᾗ ὄν [be-ing as be-ing]. Its formulating concerns be-ing as be-ing. In this way, metaphysics always formulates be-ing as such as a whole as the be-ingness [Seiendheit] of be-ing (the οὐσία [presence] of ὄν). But metaphysics formulates the be-ingness of be-ing in a twofold way: in the first place, as the entirety [das Ganze] of be-ing as such, in the sense of the most general (ὂν καθόλου, κοινόν [be-ing on the whole, what is in common]; and at the same time, however, as the entirety of be-ing as such, in the sense of the highest and thereby divine be-ing (ὂν καθόλου, ἀκρότατον, θεῖον [the universal, what is the furthermost, divinity]). The emergence of be-ing was developed in its twofold sense especially in the metaphysics of Aristotle (cf. *Metaphysics* Γ, E, K).

Because it makes be-ing as be-ing an idea, metaphysics in itself is in fact two-in-one: the truth of be-ing in the most general sense and in the highest sense. In its essence it is ontology, in the narrower [scholastic] sense, and theology. This onto-theological essence of authentic philosophy (πρώτη φιλοσοφία[73]) must indeed be accounted for by the way it brings ὄν, that is, as ὄν, out into the open. The theological character of ontology is not due so much to the fact that Greek metaphysics was later absorbed by Christian sacred theology and transformed by it. It is due more to the means by which be-ing as be-ing had disclosed itself [sich entborgen hat] from early on. That emergence of be-ing first made it possible for Greek philosophy to overpower Christian theology, whether to its benefit or detriment may be decided by theologians of the Christian experience as they consider what is written in the apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians: οὐχὶ ἐμώρανεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ κόσμου; (1 Cor. 1:20): "Has not God let the wisdom of this world become foolishness?"[74] But the σοφίαν τοῦ κόσμου; [wisdom of this world] is that which, according to 1:22, what the Ἕλληνες ζητοῦσιν, the Greeks are searching for. Aristotle even expressly calls πρώτη φιλοσοφία [authentic philosophy] ζητουμένη, what is sought [die gesuchte]. What if

73 First philosophy or philosophy in the primary sense.

74 "Hat nicht zur Torheit werden lassen der Gott die Weisheit der Welt?" (EWM 379)

Christian theology were to decide to take seriously the words of the apostle just for once and so also the foolishness of philosophy?

Metaphysics as the truth of be-ing as such takes on two forms. But the basis of its dual form and indeed its origin remain closed off to metaphysics, though not accidentally or as the result of an omission. Metaphysics accepts this dual form since it is what it is: the formulating of be-ing as be-ing. Metaphysics has no choice. It is excluded by its own nature as metaphysics from the experience of *be*[ing], for be-ing (ὄν), as formulated by metaphysics, always formulates nothing but what has already been indicated as be-ing (ᾗ ὄν). But metaphysics never even pays attention to what has been hidden in this ὄν, insofar as it has been allowed to come out [unverborgen].[75]

And so the time necessarily came to think over [nachdenken] what is actually said about ὄν by the word 'be-ing [seiend]'. Accordingly, the question about ὄν took deeper root [wieder geholt] in thinking (cf. the preface to *Being and Time*). But such repeating [Widerholen] does not merely parrot the Platonic-Aristotelian question, but rather asks in return [fragen zurück] what is in hiding in ὄν.*[76]

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75 'Verbergen' means "to hide," used either intransitively (hiding oneself, going into hiding) or transitively (concealing something from view). Taken intransitively, the state of being in hiding is seclusion [Verborgenheit]. Coming out of seclusion is expressed by the neologism 'unverbergen' and translated as "(to) emerge." In this passage, a form of the verb 'unverbergen' is being used transitively and in the passive mood. Thus, one is brought out of seclusion. So it is in the case of any sort of be-ing, which is brought out of seclusion thanks to *be*[ing], not by virtue of its be-ing.

76 *Fifth edition (1949): "der Unterschied [the difference]." (EWM 380)

The question "What is metaphysics?" asks a "backwards" question. Many of those who heard the lecture in 1929 surely wondered why the question had been raised at all. Moreover, the lecture "answers" the question raised in the title with another question, What is *be*[ing]?

Metaphysics continues to be founded on what is hidden [das Verborgene] in ὄν, even when its formulating is devoted to ὂν ᾗ ὄν [be-ing as be-ing]. Inquiring in [re]turn [Zurückfragen] [in]to what, from the point of view of metaphysics, is hidden searches about for the foundation [Fundament] of ontology. That is why the procedure in *Being and Time* (p. 34)[77] is called "fundamental ontology." But in this case, as with every such term, the nomenclature proves from the start to be unfortunate. It says something correct about metaphysics as it is understood here, yet for that very reason leads to error, for it is out to accomplish in thinking the transition from metaphysics to the truth of *be*[ing]. As long as such thinking about the truth of *be*[ing] is described only as fundamental ontology, the designation gets in its own way and obscures it. Of course, the term "fundamental ontology" suggests the view that thinking which attempts to think the truth of *be*[ing] and not, like all ontology, the truth of be-ing, is even as fundamental ontology still a kind [Art] of ontology. Meanwhile, thinking of the truth of *be*[ing] as getting to the bottom of metaphysics has with the first step it takes already abandoned the sphere of all ontology. By comparison, all philosophy that turns on a straightforward or indirect formulating of "transcendence" necessarily remains ontology in an essential sense, whether it wants to effect a laying of the foundation of metaphysics or to assure us that it rejects ontology as a conceptual freezing of living [Erleben].

Indeed, if thinking that now attempts to think the truth of *be*[ing] gets caught up in formulating because of a long habit of formulating be-ing, then as a first consideration as well as occasion for the transition from formulating to recollective [andenkende] thinking, probably nothing is more necessary than the question, "What is metaphysics?"

For its own part, the unfolding of this question in the following lecture concludes with a question. It is called the basic question of metaphysics and goes: Why be-ing, after all, and not rather no-thing?[78] Since then, much has been said back and forth about the dread and no-thing which are spoken about in the

77 *Sein und Zeit*, p. 18. The text of *Wegmarken* cites p. 13.

78 "Warum ist überhaupt Seiendes und nicht vielmehr Nichts?" (EWM 381) Variant: Why is there any kind of be-ing and not no-thing instead?

lecture. But it has not yet occurred to people to think over [überliegen] why a lecture that attempts to think from thinking of the truth of *be*[ing] to [thinking] of no-thing, and from there to the essence of metaphysics, claims that the question just given is the basic question of metaphysics. For the attentive listener, isn't there really something to be voiced that must be weightier than all the enthusiasm about dread and no-thing? The final question confronts us with the consideration that reflection which attempts to think of a way beyond no-thing to *be*[ing] in the end returns once again to a question about be-ing. Inasmuch as this question, in being introduced with Why?, asks causally in the conventional way of metaphysics, thinking of *be*[ing] is completely disavowed in favor of formulating knowledge about be-ing from [aus] be-ing. To top it all off, the final question is obviously the question that the metaphysician Leibniz put in his *Principes de la Nature et de la Grâce (Fondé en Raison) [Principles of Nature and Grace (Based on Reason)]*: "Pourquoi il y a plûtot quelque chose que rien?"[79]

Does the lecture thus fall behind in its proper intention, which is possible after all given the difficulty of the transition from metaphysics to the other [way of] thinking? In the end, does it with Leibniz*[80] ask the metaphysical question about the supreme cause of all actual things [seienden Sachen]? Why, then, is Leibniz's name not mentioned, which no doubt would be proper?

Or is the question asked in a wholly different sense? If it does not inquire about be-ing and ascertain the first actual cause of it, then the question must start out from that which is not be-ing [was nicht das Seiende ist]. That is what the question speaks of, and it capitalizes it [das Nichts], which the lecture has considered as its only theme. The requirement is obviously to think through the end of the lecture for once from within its own and always leading perspective. That which is called the basic question of metaphysics would be consummated then in a fundamental-ontological way in a question from the very

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79 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Leibniz: Die philosophischen Schriften*, edited by C.I. Gerhardt (Berlin, 1875-90), Volume VI, p. 607, n.7. Heidegger omits the phrase "based on reason" in Leibniz's title. The work was written in 1714, though not published by the author.

80 *Fifth edition (1949): "und Schelling [and Schelling]." (EWM 382)

ground [aus dem Grunde] of metaphysics and as a question about this ground.

But granted that, at its conclusion, the lecture is on course to what concerns it, how then should we understand the question?

It runs: Why be-ing, after all, and not rather no-thing? Assuming that we no longer think metaphysically in the customary way of metaphysics, but rather from [aus] the essence and truth of metaphysics to the truth of *be*[ing], it may now also be asked: How does it happen that be-ing always has the right of way and takes advantage on its own of every "is," while that which is not [an instance of] be-ing, that no-thing so understood as *be*[ing] itself, remains forgotten? How does it happen that it [Es]*[81] can really come of *be*[ing]*[82] and no-thing is not actually present [nicht west]?[83] Is it because of this that all metaphysics makes it appear inconcussible that "*be*[ing]" goes without saying[84] and therefore no-thing looks like be-ing?[85] That is indeed the way it is with *be*[ing] and no-thing. Were it otherwise, then Leibniz could not

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81 *Fifth edition (1949): "für die Metaphysik [for metaphysics]." (EWM 382) That is, what is, for metaphysics, no-thing. This is the "es" of "es gibt."

82 Fifth edition (1949): "als solchen [as such]." (EWM 382) See the next note.

83 "Woher kommt es, daß Es mit dem Sein eigentlich nichts ist und das Nichts eigentlich nicht west?" (EWM 382) This is certainly the climactic question of the essay. Variant: How does it happen that nothing comes of *be*[ing] / it is actually nothing to *be* and no-thing does not come to be? It seems to me that Heidegger's usage of 'Sein' here justifies my translation of the word throughout as 'be'.

84 That is, that the word 'Sein' is unspoken in every articulation of any kind of be-ing. *Be*[ing] is taken for granted in be-ing.

85 "Kommt gar von hier der unerschütterte Anschein in alle Metaphysik, daß sich 'Sein' von selbst verstehe und daß sich demzufolge das Nichts leichter mache als Seiende?" (EWM 382)

have said in the same place by way of clarification: "Car le rien est plus simple et plus facile que quelque chose."[86]

Which is more puzzling: this, that be-ing is; or this, that *be*[ing] "is"?[87] Or in this reflection do we not also already approach the vicinity [Nähe] of the riddle that has eventuated sich ereignet]*[88] with the *be*[ing] of*[89] be-ing?

But whatever the answer may be, in the meantime the time should have become riper to think through the much beleaguered lecture "What Is Metaphysics?" for once from its conclusion, from *its* end, not from an imaginary one.

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86 "Since nothing is simpler and easier than something."

87 "Was bleibt rätselhafter, dies, daß Seiendes ist, oder dies, daß Sein 'ist'?" (EWM 383)

88 Variant: . . . has come to pass . . ..

*Fifth edition (1949): "Ereignis der Vergessenheit des Unterschieds [the eventuality of the forgottenness of the difference]." (EWM 383)

89 *Fifth edition (1949): "der Unterschied [the difference]." (EWM 383)

WHAT IS METAPHYSICS? (1929)

"What is metaphysics?" The question leads one to expect talk about metaphysics. We will forgo that. Instead we will elucidate a definite metaphysical question. In this way, it seems, we will be placed in the midst of metaphysics. Only thus will we make it really possible for metaphysics to explain itself.

Our task begins by presenting a metaphysical question, goes on to elaborate the question, and ends with its answer.

The Presentation of a Metaphysical Question

According to Hegel, philosophy is from the point of view of good common sense "the world turned upside down."[90] The peculiarity of our undertaking therefore requires some preparatory remarks. This results

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90 "Die Philosophie ist ihrer Natur nach etwas esoterisches, für sich weder für den Pöbel gemacht, noch einer Zubereitung für den Pöbel fähig; sie ist nur dadurch Philosophie daß sie dem Verstande, und damit noch mehr dem gesunden Menschenverstande, worunter man die lokale und temporäre Beschränktheit eines Geschlechts der Menschen versteht, gerade entgegengesetzt ist; im Verhähltniß zu diesem ist an und für sich die Welt der Philosophie eine verkehrte." G.W.F. Hegel, "Einleitung. Über das Wesen der philosophischen Kritik überhaupt, und ihr Verhältnis zum gegenwärtigen Zustand der Philosophie insbesonderes[Introduction. On the Essence of Philosophical Criticism in General, and its Relation to the Present State of Philosophy in Particular]" (1802), in Hegel's *Gesammelte Werke*, edited by Hartmut Buchner and Otto Pöggeler (Hamburg: Meiner, 1968) IV, p. 124-25. The text is Hegel's general introduction

from the twofold character of metaphysical questions.

First, every metaphysical question always grasps the whole of the problematic of metaphysics. In every case it is the whole itself. Furthermore, every metaphysical question can only be asked in such a way that the one doing the questioning, such as he is, is there (in) the question, that is, is put into question. From this we take the following directive: a metaphysical question must be put in its entirety and from the essential position of (the) questioning existence [des fragenden Daseins]. We, here and now, question on our *own* behalf. Our existence in the community of scholars, teachers and students is determined by science. What is really happening to us at the heart [im Grunde] of our existence, now that science has become our passion?

The fields of science are widely separated from each other. Their ways of dealing with the objects they inquiry about are fundamentally different. In our time such dissociated diversity of disciplines is held together only thanks to the technical organization of the universities and their faculties, and is given meaning by establishing a common practical aim for the various departments. But, as a result, close contact among the sciences in their essential common ground has died off.

And yet—in all the sciences, when we follow their own most proper aim we relate ourselves to be-ing itself. Precisely from the point of view of science, no field takes precedence over the others, neither nature over history nor vice versa. No one method of dealing with objects dominates the others. Mathematical knowledge is no stricter than philological-historical knowledge. It merely has the character of "exactness," which is not the same as strictness. To demand exactness of the study of history goes against the specific strictness of the humanities [Geisteswissenschaften]. The relationship [Bezug] to the world prevailing in all the sciences as such allows them to look for be-ing itself with a view to making it an object of investigation and substantiating definition according to its whatness [Wasgehalt] and mode of being [Seinsart]. The idea is that the sciences effect a *rapprochement* [In-die-Nähe-kommen] with the essential [Wesentlichen] in all things [Dinge].

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to the *Critical Journal of Philosophy* which he and Schelling edited.

This distinctive relationship of the world to be-ing itself is borne out and guided by a freely adopted attitude [Haltung] of human life [meschlichen Existenz]. To be sure, man's prescientific and extra-scientific dealings are also related to be-ing. But science is distinctive in that, in its own way, it lets the matter itself [die Sache selbst] explicitly and solely have the last word. With such objectivity [Sachlichkeit] of questioning, defining and substantiating, a certain limited submission to be-ing itself is effected, so that it can thereby itself. This submissive position taken by research and teaching comes to be the basis of the possibility of a unique, though limited kind of guiding influence on the entirety of human life. The particular relationship of science to the world and the guiding attitude of man within it can be fully conceptualized, of course, only when we see and grasp what happens in a relationship to the world attained in this way. Man—one [kind of] be-ing among others—"pursues the sciences." In this "pursuit" nothing less happens than the disruption by one be-ing, called man, of the entirety of be-ing, so that in and through this disruption be-ing thereby gives over what and how it is. In its own way, this eruptive disruption helps be-ing first come into its own.

In its radical unity, this trinality—relationship to the world, attitude, invasion—brings an enlivening simplicity and keenness to existence [Da-sein][91] in the life of science [wissenschaftliche Existenz]. If we expressly take over for ourselves such an enlightened scientific existence [Da-sein], then we must say:

That to which the relationship to the world refers is be-ing itself—and nothing more [und sonst nichts].[92],*[93]

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91 'Da-sein' (hyphenated) stresses the *being* there of existence and will be translated as "*being* there." This instance and the next occurrence of 'Da-sein' are exceptions.

92 "Worauf der Weltbezug geht, ist das Seiende selbst -- und sonst nichts." (WM 105) Variant: The relationship to the world extends to be-ing -- and nothing else besides.

93 *First edition (1929): "Man hat diesen Zusatz hinter dem Gedankenstrich als willkürlich und künstlich ausgegeben und weiß nicht, daß Taine, der als Vertreter und Zeichen eines ganzen,

That from which any attitude takes its direction is be-ing itself—and more than that, nothing [und weiter nichts].

That which scholarly discussion effects with its disruption is be-ing itself—and above and beyond that, nothing [und darüber hinaus nichts].

But it is remarkable that just when scientific man makes sure of what is most his own, he speaks of something else. Only be-ing is supposed to be studied, and besides that—nothing; only be-ing, and more than that—nothing; solely be-ing, and beyond that—nothing.

How do things stand with this no-thing [Nichts]?[94] Is it an accident that we speak quite automatically in

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noch herrschenden Zeitalters genommen werden kann, wissentlich diese Formel zur Kennzeichnung seiner Grundstellung und Absicht gebraucht [The addition after the hyphen may seem arbitrary and artificial without knowing that Taine, who can be called the representative and symbol of the whole of the still prevailing era, knowingly used this formula as the characterization of his starting point and purpose]." (WM 105) Hippolyte-Adolphe Taine (1828-1893), philosopher and "psychologist," was one of the leading lights of positivism in France and an influence, for example, on Jean Piaget's genetic epistemology and, indirectly, on contemporary cognitive psychology.

94 I have translated 'das Nichts' as no-thing (hyphenated) to reflect Heidegger's point that 'das Nichts' is the absence of any effective actuality (be-ing) of any kind whatsoever. No thing of any sort can be detected. This contrasts with 'das Seiende' (be-ing) in all its various modes.

Here begins a proliferation of terms used by Heidegger in his discussion of no-thing. Some are in common use in German, some have technical resonances in the literature of philosophy, and some are Heidegger's neologisms (marked with an *). Occasionally, an English

this way? Is it then only a manner of speaking—and nothing more?

But why do we trouble ourselves about this no-thing? In fact, no-thing is indeed turned away by science and given up [on] as the null and void [das Nichtige]. But if we give up no-thing in such a way, do we not indeed accept it? But can we talk about an acceptance if we accept nothing [nichts]? Yet maybe all this back and forth has already turned into empty verbal wrangling. Science must then renew its seriousness

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neologism (marked **) has been required. The terms and their place of first appearance in the text are as follows: the pronoun '*nichts*' [nothing, nothing (at all)] (105) and its related noun *'*das Nichts*' [no-thing] (105); the noun *'*das Nicht'* [the not] (108); the verb *'*nichten*' [to nihilate] (114), its related present participle and adjective *'*nichtend*' [nihilating] (114), and the nouns *'*die Nichtung'* [nihilation] (114) and '*das Nichten*' [nihilating] (115); the noun *'*das Nichthaft*' [the not-like] (108), based on an implied neologism, the adjective *'*nichthaft*'; the verb *'vernichten'* [to annihilate] (113) and the noun *'die Vernichtung*' [annihilation] (113); two composite nouns '*das Nicht-Seiende*' [what is not be-ing; i.e. what is other than one kind of be-ing or another] (108) and '*das Nichtseiend*' [not-be-ing; i.e. what is not at the time be-ing] (119); the nouns *'*das Nichtige*' [the null and void] (106) and '*die Nichtigkeit*' [nullity] (119) (from the adjective '*nichtig*' [null, invalid, void]); the verb '*verneinen*' [to negate] (109), its past participle '*verneint*' [negated] (109) and related adjective '*verneinend*' [negative, negating] (113), based on the present participle of 'verneinen', and five related nouns: '*die Verneinung*' [negation, in the sense of what is accomplished by placing a negative sign in front of a term in symbolic logic or mathematics)] (107), *'*das Verneint*' [the negated, the **negatived] (108), *'*die Verneintheit*' [negativity] 108), *'*das Zu-verneinend*' [what is do the negating] (116), and '*das Verneinen*' [negating] (117); the noun *'*das Verneinbar*' [the **negatable], based on a neologism, the adjective '*verneinbar*' [**negatable] (116); the adverb '*nein*' ['no'] used as an interjection (118), and its related noun *'*das Nein'* [the No] (117); and the adverb 'kein' [no, none, or not any] (112).

and assert its soberness in opposition to this, so that it has only to do with be-ing [um das Seiende geht]. No-thing—what can it be for science except a horror and a phantasm? If science is right, then one thing is for certain: science wants to know nothing of no-thing [vom Nichts nichts wissen]. In the end, this is the scientifically strict comprehension of no-thing. We know it in wanting to know nothing about the no-thing.[95]

Science wants to know nothing of no-thing. But even so it is nonetheless certain that, when it attempts to talk about its own essence [Wesen],*[96] it calls on no-thing for help. It claims for its own what it has rejected. What sort of conflicted*[97] essence unveils itself here?

Reflection on our present life [augenblickliche Existenz] as one determined by science finds us in the midst of a conflict. In the dispute a question has already presented itself. The question merely needs to be articulated. How do things stand with no-thing?

The Elaboration of the Question

The development of the question about no-thing must put us in the position to be clear about whether it is possible or impossible to answer this question. No-thing *has been* admitted. With overweening indifference toward it, science commends it as what "is not [a] given."[98]

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95 "Wir wissen es, indem wir von ihm, dem Nichts, nichts wissen wollen." (WM 106)

96 *Fifth edition (1949): "die positive and ausschließlich Haltung zum Seienden [the positive and exclusive attitude toward be-ing]." (WM 106)

97 *Third edition (1931): "ontologische Differenz [ontological difference]." (WM 106)

*Fifth edition (1949): "Nichts als 'Sein' [no-thing as '*be*(ing)]'." (WM 106)

98 "Die Wissenschaft gibt es, mit einer überlegenen Gleichgültigkeit gegen es, preis als das,

All the same, we will try to speak about no-thing. What is no-thing? Our first approach to this question already shows us something unusual about it. From the outset in asking this question we posit no-thing as something that "is" such and such, as be-ing. But plainly it has in fact been distinguished from just that.*[99] The question about no-thing—what and how it, no-thing, is—turns what is being questioned into its opposite. The question robs itself of its own object.

Accordingly, every answer to this question is impossible from the outset. For it necessarily starts out in the form: no-thing "is" this or that. Question and answer alike are themselves just as nonsensical with respect to no-thing.

But such a dismissal doesn't have to come from science. The commonly referred to ground rule of all thinking (the principle of avoiding contradiction), everyday "logic" puts down [niederschlagen] this question. For thinking, which in essence is always thinking about something [etwas], would be working against its own nature in thinking about no-thing.

Because we keep on failing to make no-thing as such into an object [Gegenstand], we have already come to the end of our question about no-thing, on the assumption that "logic"*[100] is the highest authority on this question, that the intellect [Verstand] is the means and thinking the way to grasp no-thing in an original way and to decide about its disclosure [Enthüllung].

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was 'es nicht gibt'." (WM 107)

99 *Fifth edition (1949): "der Unterschied, die Differenz [the distinction, the difference]." (WM 107) 'Unterschied' also refers to the difference in a subtraction problem. 'Differenz' may also mean difference of opinion or discrepancy (implying error).

100 *First edition (1929): "d.h. Logik im gewöhnlichen Sinne, was man so dafür nimmt [that is, logic in the usual sense that one uses the term]." (WM 107)

But can the rule of "logic" be challenged? Isn't the intellect really lord and master in this question about no-thing? After all, only with its help can we determine no-thing at all and formulate it as a problem, even if only as one that eliminates itself.[101] For no-thing is the negation [Verneinung][102] of the generality [Allheit] of be-ing, simply not be-ing [das schlechthin Nicht-Seiende]. Yet with that we subsume no-thing under the higher determination of the not-like [das Nichthaft] and therewith, so it seems, the negated [das Verneint]. But under the ruling and never challenged doctrine of "logic," negation [Verneinung] is a specific mental act. How then can we with the question of no-thing, and indeed with the question about its questionability, hope to bid adieu to the intellect? Are we that certain about what we presuppose here? Does the not [das Nicht], negativity [die Verneintheit], and hence negation have about it a higher determination under which no-thing, as a particular species of the negated, falls? Is there no-thing only because there is the not, i.e., negation? Or is it the other way around? Is there negation and the not only because there is no-thing?[103] This has not been decided; indeed not once has the question been expressly raised. We maintain that no-thing is more original*[104] than the not and negation.

If our thesis is correct, then the possibility of negation as a mental act, and therewith the intellect itself, depends in some way upon no-thing. What hope is there then to decide about this? Does the seeming absurdity of the question and answer regarding no-thing rest solely on the blind single-mindedness*[105] of

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101 "Nur mit seiner Hilfe können wir doch überhaupt nur das Nichts betstimmen und als ein wenn auch nur sich selbst verzehrendes Problem ansetzen." (WM 107)

102 This sense of negation is exemplified by what the negative sign does in mathematics.

103 "Gibt es das Nichts nur, weil es das Nicht, d.h. die Verneinung gibt? Oder liegt es umgekehrt? Gibt es die Verneinung und das Nicht nur, weil es das Nichts gibt?" (WM 108)

104 *Fifth edition (1949): "Ursprungsordnung [(in the) order of origin or origination]." (WM 108)

105 *Fifth edition (1949): "die blinde Eigensinnigkeit: die *certitudo* des *ego cogito*, Subjektivität [blind single-mindedness: the certainty of the I think, subjectivity]." (WM 108)

our far-ranging intellect?

However, if we do not allow ourselves to be led astray by the formal impossibility of the question about no-thing and still confront the question, we must then at the very least satisfy what is still as the basic requirement of the possible development of any question. If no-thing is to be questioned in the way questioning works, then it must itself be given in advance. We must be able to encounter it.

How do we go after [suchen] no-thing? How do we find no-thing? In order to find something [etwas], must we not already know that it is there [daß es da ist] at all? Indeed! First and foremost, a person is able to look for something only if he has already anticipated the actual presence [Vorhandensein] of what is being sought [das Gesuchte].[106] But what is sought here is no-thing. In the end, is there [gibt es] seeking without some anticipation, a seeking to which a proper finding belongs?

Be that as it may, we know no-thing even if only as that which we casually talk about day in and day out. Without further ado, we can work out a "definition" of this pale no-thing, which in all the colorlessness of self-evidence so inconspicuously hangs around our talk:

No-thing is the complete negation of the generality of be-ing. In the end, isn't this characteristic of no-thing a sign of the only direction from which it can encounter us?

Generality of be-ing must be given beforehand in order to be made invalid [verfallen zu können] as such by negation, in which no-thing itself then must manifest [bekunden] itself.

But even if we ignore the questionability of the relation between negation and no-thing, how should we as finite essences, make the whole of be-ing in its generality accessible in itself and to ourselves in particular

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106 "Zunächst und zumeist vermag der Mensch nur dann zu suchen, wenn er has Vorhandensein des Gesuchten vorweggenommen hat." (WM 109)

[zumal]?[107] If need be, we can think of the whole of be-ing as an "idea [Idee]," and then negate what has been thus thought up and "think" of it as negated. In this way we do reach the formal concept of a "thought up" [eingebildeten] no-thing, but never no-thing itself.[108] But no-thing is nothing,[109] and no difference can prevail between the thought up no-thing and "real [eigentlich]" no-thing, unless no-thing represents something other than the complete absence of difference [Unterschiedslösigkeit].[110] But "real" no-thing itself, isn't it once again that concealed and absurd concept of an actual no-thing [eines seienden Nichts]?[111] For one last time now the objections of our intellect would call a halt to our search, the legitimacy of which can be demonstrated only through a fundamental experience [Grunderfahrung] of no-thing.

As surely as we never get a sure grasp of the generality of be-ing in itself, just as surely do we all the same find ourselves somehow placed in the midst of the generality of bare [enthüllt] be-ing. In the end, there continues to be [besteht] an essential difference between getting a grasp of the whole of be-ing in itself and finding oneself in the midst of be-ing as a whole [des Seienden im Ganzen].[112] The former is impossible in principle. The latter happens all the time in our existence. Of course, it looks just as though in our everyday comings and goings we were holding fast to only just this or that [kind of] be-ing, as though we were lost in this or that realm of be-ing. But no matter how fragmented the daily round may

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107 'Zumal' also means "at the same time."

108 The "thought up" is in one sense the imaginary. The point is, we can never imagine away everything.

109 "Aber das Nichts ist nichts . . .." (WM 109)

110 'Unterschiedslösigkeit' also means indifference, the condition of having lost all capacity for making (a) difference or for making differentiations.

111 Here Heidegger is pointing to the patent [seienden] latency [Nichts] of anything whatsoever.

112 The fundamental sense of "das Seiende im Ganzen" seems to be "be-ing at all."

seem, it always maintains be-ing in the unity of a "whole [Ganzes]," although only in the shadows.[113] Even then and precisely just then, when we are not especially busy with things[114], this "as a whole"[115] overcomes us; for example, in genuine boredom. This is a long way off far off when this or that book or play, job or leisure activity,[116] is boring [langeweilt]. It breaks out when "it's boring [es einem langweileg ist]." Profound boredom, like a silent fog insinuating itself in the depths of existence, pulls things, others and oneself into it altogether with remarkable indifference. Such boredom reveals be-ing as a whole.

Another possibility of such revelation [Offenbarung] lies concealed in our joy in the present [Gegenwart][117] [of the] existence, not merely the person, of someone we love.

Being attuned in such a way that we "are" one way or another, we find ourselves [befinden] in the midst of be-ing as a whole being attuned by it. Not only does the situatedness [Befindlichkeit][118] of mood disclose be-ing as a whole in its own way, but this disclosing, far from being a mere incident, is at the same time the fundamental event [Grundgeschehen] of our *being* there.

113 This is the unity of what is simultaneously minimally ("at all") and maximally ("all") delimited.

114 The sense here is of when we are whiling away the time, fooling around, tinkering about.

115 This is the "at all" of "being at all."

116 Today Heidegger would likely have referred to watching television, playing video games, or passing the time with other such diversions.

117 'Gegenwart' actually means "the present" (in contrast with "the past" and "the future") or the grammatical "present tense." This is a telling usage. Heidegger here points to the coincidence of tense and temporal mode in existence. He refers in the same way to no-thing (WM 112).

118 Finding ourselves at all means finding ourselves somewhere, in a particular place, as χώρα.

What we call our "feelings [Gefühle]," then, are neither the fleeting concomitant [Begleiterscheinung][119] of our thinking and willing behavior, nor a mere causal impetus to such, nor even an actually present condition [vorhandener Zustand] with which we have to come to terms in some way.

Yet just when moods in such a way bring be-ing as a whole before us, they hide from us the no-thing we are looking for. We are then even less of the opinion that the negation of be-ing as a whole revealed in mood puts no-thing before us. Accordingly, that sort of thing could happen to begin with [ursprünglich][120] only in a mood that reveals no-thing in the most proper sense of disclosing it.

Does such being attuned in which no-thing itself is brought before us happen in human existence [im Dasein des Menschen]?

This event is possible and happens, though only rarely and only for an instant, in the fundamental mood of dread [Angst]. In this sense, dread does not refer to the regularly occurring anxiety [Ängstlichkeit] that has its source in the fearfulness [Furchtsamkeit] that so easily appears in us. Dread is fundamentally different from fear [Furcht]. We are afraid of this or that determinate [kind of] be-ing which threatens us in this or that regard. Fear of . . . is also in every case being afraid of something determinate [etwas Bestimmtes]. Since fear has about it the limitation of an "of what" and "about what," the frightening and frightful become bound by that in which one finds himself. In striving to save himself from it, from this determinate [something], one becomes unsure of himself with regard to everything else, that is, "in a panic" about everything.

Dread does not give rise to such confusion. On the contrary, an odd calm pervades it. Dread is indeed always dread of . . ., but not of this or that. Dread of . . . is always dread about . . ., but not about this or that. The indeterminacy of and about what we are in dread is not some sort of failure of determinacy, but

119 'Begleiterscheinung' may also mean "side-effect."

120 'Ursprünglich' also means originatively, in a way that occasions or originates the event in question.

rather the essential impossibility of determinacy. This is illustrated by the following familiar explanation.

In dread, as we say, "something is uncanny [ist es einem unheimlich]." What do we mean by "something" and "is"? We cannot say what the uncanny something is about. There is something like this about the "as a whole [im Ganzen]"[121]: all things [Dinge] and we ourselves sink into indifference.*[122] Not in the sense of merely disappearing, but rather, in its very moving away [Wegrücken], it turns to us. This moving away of be-ing as a whole that closes in on [umdrängt] us in dread pressures [bedrängt] us.[123] There's nothing to get a hold on.[124] All that remains and comes over us in the slipping away of be-ing is this "no [kein]."

Dread reveals no-thing.

We are "suspended [schweben]" in dread.[125] More clearly, dread leaves us hanging because it brings on the slipping away of be-ing. So it is that we actual human beings [seienden Menschen]*[126] slip away

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121 "Im Ganzen ist einem so." (WM 111) Variant: There is also something of this about the "at all" (as in "be-ing at all").

122 *Fifth edition (1949): "das Seiende spricht nicht mehr an [be-ing no longer appeals to this]."

123 In the following lines, Heidegger plays off the verbs 'bedrängen' (to pressure, in the sense of forcing someone's hand), 'umdrängen' (to close in on the way a storm approaches), and 'andrängen' (to play against, the way actors "play off" one another on stage).

124 "Es bleibt kein Halt." (WM 112) Variant: There's no getting a hold on anything.

125 Variant: We are "at sea" in dread.

126 The play is on the convertibility of the expressions "human being" and "be-ing human," in which be-ing means effective actuality.

[mitentgleiten] from ourselves in the midst of be-ing. For at bottom this is not uncanny to you or me, but rather "it" is like that. In the shuddering [Durchschütterung] of this suspense [Schweben], where one can hold on to nothing [nichts], only really *being* there [das reine Da-sein] remains.*[127]

Dread strikes us dumb.[128] Because be-ing as a whole slips away and straightaway no-thing rushes in, every saying "Is" [jedes "Ist"-Sagen] about it is silent in the face of it. That in the uncanniness of dread we even often attempt to break the empty stillness with random chatter is only proof of [the] present [Gegenwart] [of] no-thing. That dread discloses no-thing is then immediately confirmed when dread has eased off. In light of what we had just seen while it was still fresh in our memory, we are forced to say that that about and of which we were in dread was "really [eigentlich]" nothing at all [nichts]. Indeed, no-thing itself, as such, was there.*[129]

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*Fifth edition (1949): "aber nicht der Mensch als Mensch 'des' Da-sein [but not man a man 'in' existence]." (WM 112) Heidegger is not speaking of the "human (being)" (man or woman) understood as somehow the *result* (therefore, a "finished" being) of *being* there at all [Da-sein]. The additional play here is on 'Dasein' [existence], 'Da-sein' [(the emphatic state of) *being* there], and the verb 'da-sein' [to be there].

127 All that remains is pure, unalloyed *being* there. Variant: Here, in the shuddering of such suspense, where there is no thing of any kind to hold on to, there remains only / nothing other than pure *being* there.

*Fifth edition (1949): "das Da-sein 'im' Mensch [the *being* there 'of' man]." The point is that existence belongs *only* to human beings. See the Introduction to the address.

128 "Die Angst verschlägt uns das Wort." (WM 112) Variant: Dread leaves us speechless (with nothing to say, without words to express ourselves).

129 "In der Tat: das Nichts selbst -- als solche -- war da." (WM 112)

*Fifth edition (1949): "heißt: enthüllte sich; Entbergung und Stimmung [that is to say,

In the fundamental mood of dread we have reached the event of existence in which no-thing is made manifest and in which it must be questioned.[130]

How do things stand with no-thing?

The Answer to the Question

We have already initially given what, for our purposes, is the only essential answer to our question, if we take care that the question about no-thing has actually been posed. For this demands that we carry out the conversion of man*[131] into his *being* there [des Menschen in sein Da-sein], which every instance of dread occasions in us, in order to apprehend no-thing, which is obvious in it*[132] as it manifests itself. At the same time the demand finally comes to ward off characterizations of no-thing that have not arisen from what is being claimed here.

No-thing discloses itself in dread, but not as [a kind of] be-ing. Just as little is it given as an object. Dread

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discloses itself; opening up and mood]." 'Entbergung' is a neologism with allusions to confessing, letting one's real "feelings" show through, opening up, letting go.

130 In dread, we have caught up with existence and see it as it first comes to pass.

131 *Fifth edition (1949): "als Subjekt! Da-sein aber schon denkend heir vorerfahren, nur deshalb die Frage "Was ist Metaphysik?" hier fragbar geworden [as subject! Only by thinking of *being* there as already having been experienced beforehand has the question "What Is Metaphysics?" become questionable]." (WM 113)

132 *Fifth edition (1949): "Entbergung [opening up]." (WM 113)

is not an apprehension of no-thing.[133] Nevertheless, no-thing is made manifest by and in it, although, once again, not as if no-thing appeared [zeigte sich] separate "from [neben]" be-ing as a whole, which we found happening in uncanniness.*[134] Rather, we have said that it happens no-thing is at one with [in eins mit] be-ing as a whole.[135] What does this "at one with" mean?*[136]

In dread, be-ing as a whole becomes untenable. In what sense does this happen? After all, be-ing is not annihilated [vernichtet] so that no-thing is left over. How could it be otherwise, when dread finds itself completely powerless in the face of be-ing as a whole! Moreover, no-thing manifests itself specifically with and in be-ing as something that is slipping away as a whole [im Ganzen].

No annihilation [Vernichtung] of all of [ganzen] be-ing comes about in dread, though just as little do we carry out a negation of be-ing as a whole [im Ganzen] in order to reach no-thing in the first place. Apart from the fact that the express making of such a negative statement is foreign to dread, we have always come too late with the very negation that is supposed to give us no-thing. No-thing comes to pass long before that.[137] As we have said, it happens "at one with" be-ing as a whole that is slipping away.

In dread there is found a giving way to . . ., which is admittedly not so much a fleeing as a spellbound calm.[138] This [falling] back before [Zurück vor . . .] takes its point of departure in no-thing. It is not a

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133 "Die Angst ist kein Erfassen des Nichts." (WM 113)

134 Fifth edition (1949): "Unheimlichkeit und Unverborgenheit [uncanniness and emergence]." (WM 113)

135 " . . . das Nichts begenet in der Angst in eins mit dem Seienden im Ganzen." (WM 113)

136 *Fifth edition (1949): "der Unterschied [the difference]."

137 "Das Nichts begegnet vordem schon." (WM 114)

138 "In der Angst liegt ein Zurückweichen vor . . ., das freilich kein Fliehen mehr ist, sondern eine gebannte Ruhe." (WM 114) Variant: This falling back in the face of / retreating from what

pulling in on itself, but rather essentially a turning away.[139] The turning away, however, is as such an expelling[140] of be-ing as a whole that *lets* it slip out of one's grasp. The whole rejecting expulsion*[141] of be-ing as a whole that is slipping away, which is the way dread closes in on existence, is the essence of no-thing: nihilation [die Nichtung]. Neither is it an annihilation of be-ing nor does it come from [entspringt] negation. Nor can nihilation be accounted for by annihilation or negation. No-thing nihilates of its own.*[142]

Nihilating is not an occurrence of some sort[143], but rather as the refusing expelling of be-ing as a whole that is slipping by, it reveals be-ing in its full, previously obscured foreignness as the "other than" *per se* with regard to no-thing.

In the clear night of dread's no-thing, the original openness of be-ing as such arises [ersteht] for the first

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we find in dread is admittedly not a fleeing but rather a spellbound calm.

139 Two senses of 'abweisen' are at work here: turning away from (actively rejecting) and turning down (refusing, as in turning down a job offer).

140 This may also be construed as a referring (back [zurück]) to be-ing as a whole, based on another sense of 'Verweisen' (referring).

141 *Fifth edition (1949): "ab-weisen: das Seiende für sich; ver-weisen: in das Sein des Seienden [to turn away or turn down: be-ing in and of itself; to expel or refer back: within the *be*[ing] of be-ing]."

142 "Das Nichts selbst nichtet." (WM 114)

*Fifth edition (1949): "als Nichten west, währt, gewährt das Nichts [in the way nihilating makes be, sustains, gives (up) no-thing]." (WM 114)

143 Nihilating does not begin at some point. The sense seems to be that nihilating only goes on happening. We never see its inception. No-thing has always already gotten underway.

time in such a way that it is [a kind of] be-ing and not no-thing. In adding "and not no-thing" we have not, however, added a clarification, but rather the predecessive potential [vorgängige Ermöglichung]*[144] of the openness of be-ing in general. The essence of the originally nihilating no-thing is found in this: it brings about *being* there first of all, before [vor]*[145] any kind of be-ing.

Only on the basis of the original manifestness of no-thing can the existence of human beings reach and "get into" be-ing [auf Seiendes zugehen und eingehen]. Yet, inasmuch as existence of essence relates itself to be-ing, which it is not and which it itself is, it comes forth as such existence from that very no-thing which has already been revealed.

Being there means*[146] beholdenness to no-thing.[147]

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144 *Fifth edition (1949): "d.h. Sein [that is, *be*[ing]]." (WM 114) *Be*[ing]] is the predecessive potential for be-ing at all or as a whole. In the predecessor, we find that event which Heidegger calls 'das Ereignis', the event that ushers in be-ing at all, the ground zero that marks a world for each existence. We, who exist, are thus the place holders (ciphers) of *be*[ing].

145 Variant: Originally nihilating no-thing brings forward *being* there in advance of / face to face with any such be-ing.

*Fifth edition (1949): "eigens vor Sein des Seienden, vor den Unterschied [in particular, before (the) *be*(ing) of be-ing, before the difference]." (WM 114)

146 *First edition (1929): "1.) u.a. nicht nur, 2.) daraus nicht folgern: also ist alles Nichts, sondern umgekehrt: Übernehmen und Vernehmung des Seienden, Sein und Endlichkeit [(1) but it does not mean only this; (2) thus it does not follow that all is no-thing, but rather the other way around: the taking over and questioning of be-ing, *be*[ing] and finitude]." (WM 115)

147 "Da-sein heißt: Hineingehaltenheit in das Nichts." (WM 114) Variant: Existence means involvement in no-thing.

Beholden to*[148] no-thing, existence is already beyond be-ing as a whole. We call this being above and beyond be-ing transcendence. If existence were not of essence fundamentally transcending, which now means, were it not already beholden to no-thing, then it could not relate*[149] itself to be-ing and so not even to itself.

Without [the] original manifestness of no-thing, no selfhood and no freedom.*[150]

With that the answer to the question about no-thing is found. No-thing is neither an object nor, above all, be-ing. No-thing comes neither in and of itself nor along with be-ing, upon which it depends all the same. No-thing is the potential for a manifestness of be-ing as some such thing for [für]*[151] human existence. No-thing does not primarily provide the antithesis of be-ing, but is originally of the very essence.*[152] The nihilation of no-thing happens in the *be*[ing][153] of be-ing.

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148 *Fifth edition (1949): "wer hält ursprünglich [who originally holds]?" (WM 115)

149 *Fifth edition (1949): "d.h. Nichts und Sein das Selbe [that means: no-thing and *be*[ing] the same]." (WM 115) The paratactic structure is familiar from Heidegger's late translations; for example, of the fragments of Parmenides in *Was heißt Denken?*.

150 *Fifth edition (1949): "Freiheit und Wahrheit im Vortrag 'Vom Wesen der Wahrheit' [freedom and truth in the essay 'On the Essence of Truth]." (WM 115) The essay, first given in 1930, was not published until 1943. Variant: No no-thing, no selfhood and no freedom.

151 *Fifth edition (1949): "nicht 'durch' [not 'in']." (WM 115)

152 *Fifth edition (1949): "Wesen: verbal; Wesen des Seins [essence: linguistic; essence of *be*[ing]]." (WM 115) Variant: . . . no-thing is the very essence of *be*[ing].

153 This is the first appearance of the term 'das Sein' in the lecture.

But now, finally, we must put into words a reservation we have so far withheld. If existence only relates itself to be-ing by being aimed in advance at no-thing in order to be able to exist [existieren], and if no-thing originally becomes manifest only in dread, must we not then remain permanently suspended in this dread in order to be able to exist at all? Yet have we ourselves not already admitted that this original dread is rare? But above all, all of us exist and relate ourselves to be-ing which we ourselves are not and which we ourselves are—without such dread. Is this not an arbitrary finding and the no-thing attributed to it an exaggeration?

Now what does it mean that this original dread happens only in rare instances? Nothing other than this: no-thing is at first and for the most part disguised in its originality. But how? By our getting lost in be-ing in certain ways. The more we turn to be-ing in our dealings, the less we let be-ing as such slip away, the more we turn away from no-thing. Thus all the more certainly are we forced into the public superficialities of existence.

And yet this permanent albeit ambiguous aversion to no-thing is within certain limits in accord with its inherent meaning. No-thing in its nihilating refers us right to be-ing.*[154] No-thing nihilates without fail [unausgesetzt][155], but without our really knowing about this event [Geschehen] in the sense of the kind of knowing that helps us get by on a day to day basis.

What gives more urgent evidence of the permanent and extensive, though disguised, manifestness of no-thing in our existence than negation? This, however, does not at all draw the not out of itself in order as to be a medium of differentiation and opposition in order, as it were, to force itself into the midst of what is given. Moreover, how should negation draw the not out of itself, if it can negate only when something

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154 Fifth edition (1949): "weil *in* das Sein des Seienden [because *in* the *be*[ing] of be-ing]." (WM 116)

155 Using 'continually' here would more clearly preserve the temporality of the nihilating of no-thing.

negatable [ein Verneinbares] is given.[156] But how could something negatable and what is do the negating [das Zu-verneinendes] be sighted as something not-like [ein Nichthaftes], were it not that all thinking as such already looks ahead to the not?[157] But the not can become manifest only if its origin [Ursprung], the nihilating of no-thing in general and with it no-thing itself, is brought out of seclusion. The not does not arise in negation, but rather negation bases itself on the not*[158], which comes of [entspringt] the nihilating of no-thing. But negation is also only one means of nihilating, that is to say, only one form which the behavior based ahead of time on the nihilating of no-thing takes.

In this way the above thesis has been demonstrated in its basic features: no-thing is the origin of negation, not the other way around. If the power of the intellect in the realm of the question of no-thing and of *be*[ing] is thus overcome, then the fate of the dominance of "logic"*[159] within philosophy is decided at the same time. The idea of "logic" itself dissolves in the rush of an original question.

But now no matter how often or in how many ways negation permeates all thinking, whether or not explicitly, it can scarcely by itself be the fully valid means of the manifestness of no-thing that belongs essentially to existence. For negation cannot be termed either the sole or even the leading nihilating behavior in which existence is shaken up by the nihilating of no-thing. More profound even than the mere

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156 The imagery and language here are suggestive of mathematics: givens, the negative sign [die Verneinung].

157 "Wie soll aber ein Verneinbares und Zu-verneinendes als ein Nichthaftes erblickt werden können, es sei denn so, daß alles Denken als solches auf das Nicht schon vorblick?" (WM 116)

158 *First edition (1929): "gleichwohl hier -- wie sonst Aussage -- die Verneinung zu nachträglich und äußerlich gefaßt [even here negation in the usual way of expressing it is too extraneous and superficial]." (WM 117)

159 *First edition (1929): "'Logik', d.h. die *überlieferte* Auslegung des Denkens ['logic', that is, (as) the *traditional* explanation of thinking]." (WM 117)

propriety of rational negation is the harshness of opposition and the shrillness of loathing. The pain of failure or the mercilessness of prohibition are more responsible. The harshness of deprivation is more oppressive.

These possibilities of nihilating behavior, powers by which existence supports even if it does not master its givenness [Geworfenheit][160], are not means of mere negating [Verneinens]. But that does not bar them from speaking out in the no [im Nein] and in negation. Indeed, the emptiness and extent of negation betray themselves in these for the first time. That existence is pervaded by nihilating behavior attests to the permanent and indeed obscured manifestness of no-thing that dread originally discloses. But this means original dread is suppressed for the most part in existence. Dread is there. It's only napping. Its breath permanently trembles in existence, only slightly in the apprehensive, and inaudibly in the "Uh húh!" and "Húh uh!" of those who are busy; best of all in the reserved, surest of all at the heart of existence that is daring. But this happens only in those for whom it expends itself in order to preserve the ultimate greatness [Größe] of existence.

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160 'Geworfenheit' refers to the basic condition of existence that it is given historically in such and such a way. Where and when we are born are fundamental to how our projects in life will be formulated and unfold. This endowment both allows and forces upon us a certain range of possibilities. Heidegger's usage implies our being fated to the particular conditions of our existence. In English we say some has been "had" when he has been deceived, taken in, made a fool of. There is something of this in 'Geworfenheit', too, but also a sense of mission and endowment that having been had in the human way brings into the picture. We might even try 'hadhood' here for 'Geworfenheit', since it is a German neologism. 'Geworfenheit' also refers to the status of what has to be, the givens, for example, of a problem in logic or mathematics. One sense of 'werfen', the root of term, is "having a baby." Each of us has also been "had" in this sense.

For the daring, dread is not an opponent [Gegenstellung] of joy or even of the comfortable pleasures of quiet busyness. It shares a secret bond with the cheerfulness and mildness of creative yearning.

Original dread can awaken in existence at any moment. It does not need wakening [Weckung] by an unaccustomed eventuality for that. The depth of its sway corresponds to the scarcity of its possible occasioning.[161] It is permanently on the verge [zum Spring] and yet only seldom comes into play to hold us in suspense.[162]

The beholdenness of existence to no-thing on the basis of hidden dread makes man the placeholder of no-thing. We are so finite that we are not even able to bring ourselves face to face with no-thing by our own will and resolve. So deeply is mortality buried in our existence that it denies our freedom its very own and deepest finiteness.

The beholdenness of existence to no-thing on the basis of hidden dread is the surmounting [Übersteigen] of be-ing as a whole, transcendence.

Our question about no-thing should lead us to metaphysics itself. The term 'metaphysics' stems from the Greek μετὰ τὰ φυσικά. This remarkable phrase was later interpreted to be the indication of a question that goes "beyond [über]," μετὰ (trans) be-ing as such.

Metaphysics is an asking "after [über]" be-ing, in order to get at it as it is and as a whole for our comprehension.

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161 "Der Tiefe ihres Waltens entspricht das Geringfügige ihrer möglichen Veranlassung." (WM 118) Variant: Just because its possible occasions are rare, the sway of dread is very great when it does occur.

162 Heidegger is playing on the meaning of 'umreißen' in this sentence. The sense is that one is immobilized, hemmed in by dread.

Such a going "after" be-ing as be-ing as a whole happens in the question about no-thing. In this way it is shown to be a "metaphysical" question. At the outset, we gave questions of this kind a twofold character: every metaphysical question comprehends the whole of metaphysics all at once. In every metaphysical question, questioning existence is thereupon also taken up by the question.[163]

To what extent does the question about no-thing take on and encompass the whole of metaphysics?

From of old metaphysics has spoken of itself with the admittedly ambiguous proposition *ex nihilo nihil fit*, no-thing comes from no-thing [aus Nichts wird Nichts]. Even though no-thing itself never becomes a problem, in the explication of the proposition the leading fundamental view of be-ing based on the prevailing view [Hinblick] of no-thing is nevertheless made explicit. Ancient metaphysics takes no-thing to mean not-be-ing [das Nicht-seienden], that is, unformed matter which cannot turn itself into something formlike and accordingly give the appearance [Aussehen] (εἶδος) of having be-ing. Be-ing is self-forming shape which appears as such as a picture (view [of]) [im Bilde (Anblick)]. The origin, law and limits of this view of *be*[ing] are as little discussed as no-thing itself. Christian dogmatics denies the truth of the proposition *ex nihilo nihil fit* and as a result gives it another meaning in the sense of the complete absence [Abwesenheit] of non-divine [außergöttlichen] be-ing: *ex nihilo fit—ens creatum* [created thing].[164] Here no-thing is the antithesis of authentic [eigentlich] be-ing, of the *summum ens* [the highest thing, the thing most beyond us], of God as *ens increatum* [the uncreated thing]. Here again the explanation of no-thing intimates [zeigt an] a fundamental view of be-ing. The metaphysical discussion of be-ing remains on the same level as the question about no-thing. Both questions, about *be*[ing] and no-thing, remain unasked as such. Thus there is never a concern about the difficulty that, if God creates from no-thing, he certainly has to be able to relate to no-thing. But if God is God, he can *not* know no-thing, if "the absolute" [das

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163 Variant: Existence, which questions, i.e. the human being, brought up for questioning / put in question when any metaphysical question is brought up.

164 "From no-thing comes the created thing."

"Absolute"] excludes all nullity [Nichtigkeit] as well.

This simple historical reminder marks [zeigt] no-thing as the antithesis of authentic be-ing, that is, as its negation [als dessen Verneinung]. But when no-thing somehow becomes a problem, this opposing relation does not merely experience some sort of more meaningful determination, but rather awakens for the first time a authentically metaphysical interrogative disposition toward the *be*[ing] of be-ing. No-thing does not remain the indeterminate opposite of be-ing, but rather discloses itself as belonging to the *be*[ing] of be-ing.

"Pure *be*[ing] and pure no-thing is the same." This proposition of Hegel's (*Science of Logic*) is correct.[165] *Be*[ing] and no-thing belong together, not because both of them agree in their indeterminacy and immediacy[166], but rather because *be*[ing] itself is in essence finite and revealed only in the transcendence of existence enduring no-thing [in das Nichts hinausgehaltenen Daseins].

Because the question about *be*[ing] as such is also the comprehensive question of metaphysics, the question about no-thing is shown to be of a kind that encompasses the whole of metaphysics. However, at the same time, the question about no-thing seizes upon the whole of metaphysics, insofar as it forces us to face the problem of the origin of negation, that is, to face what is fundamentally a decision about the legitimate dominance of "logic"*[167] in metaphysics.

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165 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik* (1812), translated by A.V. Miller as *Hegel's Science of Logic* (New York: Humanities Press), 1976, p. 82 [Volume I, Book One, Section One, Chapter 1]. "Das reine Sein und das reine Nichts ist also dasselbe."

166 Variant: . . . in their uncertainty or vagueness and unmediatedness.

167 *First edition (1929): "d.h. immer der überlieferten Logik und ihr Logik als Ursprung der Kategorien [this always means traditional logic and logic as the origin of the categories]." (WM 120)

The old proposition *ex nihilo nihil fit* has another sense, which happens to speak to the problem of *be*[ing] and goes like this: *ex nihilo omne ens qua ens fit*.[168] Be-ing as a whole first comes to itself in accordance with its very own possibility, that is, only in the no-thing of existence.[169] If it is metaphysical, to what extent then has the question about no-thing taken up our questioning existence? We note that our existence, as currently experienced, is determined essentially by science. Determined in this way, if our existence is posed in the question about no-thing, then it must have become questionable through this question.

Scientific existence acquires its simplicity and severity from being related in a marvelous way to be-ing itself and only to it. Science would like to dismiss no-thing with a wave of the hand. But it soon becomes obvious that this very scientific existence is possible only because it is beholden beforehand to no-thing. It first understands itself as what it is, then, when it does not abandon no-thing. The supposed seriousness and superiority of science becomes foolishness if it does not take no-thing seriously. Only because no-thing is obvious [to it] can science make be-ing an object of study. Only if science grows out of [existiert aus][170] metaphysics, can it ever prevail afresh in its essential task, which consists, not in the accumulation and classification of knowledge, but rather in an always fresh ongoing disclosure of the whole field of the truth of nature and history.

Only because no-thing is manifest at the heart of existence can the full strangeness of be-ing come over us. Only if the strangeness of be-ing impresses us does it waken us and open us up to wonder. Only on the basis of wonder, that is, the manifestness of no-thing, does the "Why?" come up [entspringt]. Only

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168 "Every thing as a thing comes from no-thing."

169 "Im Nichts des Daseins kommt erst das Seiende im Ganzen seiner eigensten Möglichkeit nach, d.h. in endlicher Weise, zu sich selbst." (WM 120)

170 See Introduction to the lecture (above), written twenty years later, in which the meaning of 'existieren' is re(de)fined. Only man exists, since [the] no-thing comes of [his] existing. Man is an original.

because the Why as such is possible can we ask in a determinate way about and establish [begründen] the basics [Gründen]. Only because we can ask and establish is the fate our life in the hands of scientists.

The question about no-thing puts us, the questioners, into question. It is a metaphysical one.

Human existence can relate to be-ing only if it is itself beholden to no-thing. Going above and beyond be-ing is of the essence of existence.[171] This going beyond, however, is metaphysics itself. That is how metaphysics belongs to "the nature of man" [zur "Natur des Menschen"].[172] It is neither a branch of academic philosophy nor a realm of scattered notions [Einfälle]. Metaphysics is the basic event of existence. It is existence itself. Because the truth of metaphysics dwells in this unfathomable ground, it has about it the ever lurking possibility of deepest error about what is in closest proximity [to it]. Hence, no strictness of a science attains the seriousness of metaphysics. Philosophy can never be measured by the yardstick of the idea of science.

Because the question about no-thing that we have gone into was actually asked of us, we have therefore not brought in metaphysics from the outside. Nor have we just "changed [our] position." We cannot put ourselves in another position at all, because inasmuch as we exist, we already stand *with*in it. φύσει γάρ,

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171 "Das Hinausgehen über das Seiende geschieht im Wesen des Daseins." (WM 121)

Variants: Exceeding be-ing is of the essence of existence. The essence of existence is being more than be-ing.

172 The reference is to Kant. See the Introduction to the lecture where it is repeated.

ὦ φίλε, ἔνεστί τις φιλοσοφία τῇ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς διανοίᾳ (Plato, *Phaedrus* 279a).[173] Insofar as man exists, philosophizing happens in a certain way. Philosophy, as we call it, is all about getting metaphysics off the ground [das In-Gang-bringen der Metaphysik] in which it comes into its own and is up to its particular task.*[174] Philosophy comes about only through our own life's undergoing a curious engagement [Einsprung] with the fundamental possibilities of existence as a whole. Decisive for this engagement is, first of all, making room for be-ing as a whole; next, letting oneself come to no-thing [das Sichloslassen in das Nichts], that is, becoming free of the idols which everyone has and among [which] we are in the habit of losing our way; finally, letting this suspense range out into what it permanently swings round to in the basic question of metaphysics which no-thing itself forces on us: Why be-ing, after all, and not rather no-thing?[175]

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173 "For by nature, my friend, philosophy is in the mind of man." Hackforth's translation: "For that mind of his, Phaedrus, contains an innate tincture of philosophy." *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntingdon Cairns (1961) Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 524.

174 *In the first edition of *Wegmarken* (1967): "zweierlei gesagt: 'Wesen' der Metaphysik und ihre eigene seinsgeschickliche Geschichte; beide später genannt in der 'Verwindung' [said two ways: [the] 'essence' of metaphysics and its own befitting history; both [are] named in 'getting over (metaphysics)']." (WM 122)

175 "Warum ist überhaupt Seiendes und nicht vielmehr Nichts?"

POSTSCRIPT TO "WHAT IS METAPHYSICS? (1949 [1943])[176]

The question "*What is metaphysics?*" remains a question. The following postscript is more an opening preface for those who persist with the question. The question "What is metaphysics?" inquires beyond metaphysics. It comes of a thinking that already has gone about getting over metaphysics. It is of the nature of such transitions that within certain limits they must speak the language of what they are helping to get over. The particular occasion of the discussion [in 1929] of the question about the nature of metaphysics must not mislead us to take the view that this question is raised by the sciences. Modern research is involved in other means of formulating and establishing be-ing in the basic features of its truth, according to which all be-ing is marked by the willingness to will [den Willen zum Willen], which as the "will to power" had begun to be the prototype of appearing [Erscheinen]. Understood as the fundamental feature of the be-ingness of be-ing, "will" make be-ing the equivalent of actualization [Wirklichung] in such a way that the actuality [Wirklichkeit] of actualization is authorized by the unconditional feasibility [Machbarkeit] of constant reification. Modern science neither serves the purpose first given to it nor searches for some "truth in itself." As a means of the calculating [rechnenden] reification of be-ing, it is the self-positing condition of the willingness to will by means of which it safeguards the sovereignty of its nature. But because all reification of be-ing arises by way of bringing into be-ing and safeguarding be-ing, and acquires the possibilities of its progress from this, reification stays with be-ing and no doubt takes this for *be*[ing]. All relating to be-ing thus attests to a knowledge of *be*[ing], but at the same time to the inability to stand by [stehen aus] the law [Gesetz]*[177] of the truth of this

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176 The following note preceded this postscript in the fourth edition (1943) of the lecture "What Is Metaphysics?," which was the first to include the postscript: " Metaphysics is a word, no matter how abstract and near to thinking the word may be, from which everyone more or less flees, as from someone afflicted with the plague." Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel, *Werke*, Band XVII, p. 400."

177 Variant: . . . the inability to stand by what is given by the truth of this knowledge.

knowledge. Such truth is a truth beyond be-ing. Metaphysics is the history of this truth. It says what be-ing is, while at the same time it makes the be-ingness of be-ing into a concept. Metaphysics thinks *be*[ing] as the be-ingness of be-ing, but to its way of thinking without being able to think about the truth of *be*-[ing]. At all times, metaphysics moves in the sphere of truth, which metaphysically speaking continues to be its unknowingly unproven grounds [unbekannte unbegründete Grund]. However, given not only that be-ing stems from *be*[ing], but also and more originally still, that *be*[ing] itself is buried deep within its truth and the truth of *be*[ing] comes to be as the *be*[ing] of truth, then the question necessarily is, What is at the bottom of metaphysics? This question must be thought metaphysically and at the same time on the grounds of metaphysics, that is, no longer metaphysically thought. Such a question is, in an essential sense, ambiguous.

Every attempt to follow the train of thought of the lecture will for this reason come up against obstacles. That's good. In that way, the question becomes more genuine. Every proper question is already the bridge to its answer. Essential answers are always but the last step of the question. But that [step] cannot be taken without a long series of first and subsequent steps. An essential answer is supported by the urgency of the question. An essential answer is only the beginning of [our] response. In this the question first comes to.[178] Therefore, a genuine question is not done away with by finding the answer to it.

Obstacles to following the argument of the lecture are of two kinds. One sort arises from a riddle that is concealed in the sphere of what is thought there. The other comes of the inability, also often the

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*Fifth edition (1949): "Ge-setz; Ereignis [(the) giv-en (com-mand); eventuality]." (NWM 304)

178 The question "What is metaphysics?" thus "comes to life" in a fresh way or even for the first time. It is roused from the slumber of ordinary treatments of it. It also "comes to" in becoming reoriented *as a question* with respect to us, the questioners: the question thus comes to have a new face. Like a ship, the question changes direction, "comes to" or "comes about."

unwillingness, to think. In the sphere of thoughtful inquiry, even passing considerations [Bedenken] can help out now and again, particularly those that are very carefully considered. Grossly mistaken views may also bear fruit, even when aimed as blind attacks. Only reflection [Nachdenken] can restore to everything the composure [Gelassenheit] of patient contemplation.

The thoughts and mistaken views about the lecture can be grouped around three main assertions:

1. The lecture makes no-thing a general object of metaphysics. But since no-thing is the null and void pure and simple, such thinking leads to the view that everything is nothing [alles sei nichts], so that it is not worthwhile either to live or die. Such a "philosophy of no-thing" is full-blown "nihilism."

2. The lecture elevates an occasional (and depressing mood at that) to being the only fundamental mood. But since dread is the psychological condition of "those who have anxiety" and of being a coward, such thinking is denied the high-spirited mien of courage. Such a "philosophy of dread" cripples any willingness [Willen] to act.

3. The lecture comes out against "logic." But since the intellect contains standards of figuring (out) [Rechnen] and organizing, such thinking consigns judgements about truth to a chance mood. Such a "philosophy of mere feelings" endangers "exact" thinking and the certainty of action.

A proper attitude toward these assertions comes of renewed deliberation [Durchdenken] about the lecture. It must be shown whether no-thing accords with [stimmt] dread in its essence, expends itself in the empty negation of all be-ing, or whether what is never and in no way be-ing, unveils itself as what distinguishes itself from all be-ing, which we call *be*[ing]. No matter where or to what extent all research scrutinizes [absuchen] be-ing, nowhere does is find *be*[ing]. It always hits upon nothing but be-ing because for the purposes of its account, it insists beforehand on be-ing. *Be*[ing], however, has nothing of the character of be-ing to give to be-ing. *Be*[ing] does not let itself be objectively thought of or established

the same as be-ing does. This absolutely other*[179] to all be-ing is the not be-ing. But this no-thing*[180] comes to pass as *be*[ing]. We call off thinking too hastily if we give the mere null and void as an easier explanation of no-thing and equate it with the unreal [Wesenlosen]. Instead of such eagerness to give in to empty astuteness and abandon the puzzling ambiguity of no-thing, we must arm ourselves in single-minded preparation for experiencing the vastness of that in no-thing which gives warrant [die Gewähr]*[181] to any sort of be-ing. That is *be*[ing] itself. Without *be*[ing], whose unfathomable but as yet undisplayed nature sends us no-thing in essential dread, all be-ing would remain in *be*[ing]lessness [Seinlosigkeit]. But this, too, as the abandonment of and by *be*[ing], is not in turn a void [nichtig] no-thing, provided that

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179 *Fourth Edition (1943): "Auch dies noch metaphysisch vom Seienden her gesagt [but this still speaks about be-ing metaphysically]." (NWM 306)

180 *Fourth Edition (1943): "vom Seienden [of be-ing]." (NWM 306)

181 *Fifth edition (1949): "das Gewährende [the granting]." (NWM 306)

something else belongs to the truth of *be*[ing] which is never†[182],*[183] present as*[184] *be*[ing]*[185] without be-ing, that nowhere†[186] is be-ing without *be*[ing].

An experience of *be*[ing] as what is other than all be-ing is a gift of dread, provided that we do not avoid

182 †In the fourth edition (1943), we read instead of 'nie': "wohl [probably, no doubt]." Notes containing the original (1943) version of postscript are preceded by (†).

183 *Fourth edition (1943): "In der Wahrheit des Seins west das Seyn qua Wesen der Differenz; dieses Seyn qua ist vor der Differenz das Ereignis und deshalb *ohne* Seiendes [*Bey*[ing] comes to be in the truth of *be*[ing] as the [the] essence of difference; this *bey*[ing] as [] is the eventuality before the difference and therefore *without* be-ing]." (NWM 306) Heidegger's crossing out of the *word* '*be*[ing]' in known from essay *Zur Seinsfrage [On the Question of Being]* (1955) New York: Twayne, 1958. The silence of the grammatical "voice" (*Aktionsart* or *genus verbi)* of *be*[ing] is indicated by the crossing out of the word, which becomes an unspoken word. Is this Heidegger's attempt to find a middle voice in German?

*Fifth edition (1949): "Vordeutung aus Seyn qua Ereignis, aber dort (in der 4. Auflage) nicht verständlich [pre-understanding of *bey*[ing] as eventuality, but not understandable there (in the fourth edition)]." (NWM 306) Just as in German 'Seyn' is an antiquated spelling of 'Sein,' in English 'beying' is an antiquated spelling of 'being'. In pointing to the near antiquity of the spelling of 'Sein', he shows how pliable language is. It is readily compliant with the need for giving verbal expression to thought. Hölderlin, of course, still spelled the word 'Seyn'.

184 *Fifth edition (1949): "Wesen von Sein: Seyn, Unterschied; 'Wesen' von Sein mehrdeutig: 1. Ereignis, nicht durch Seiendes bewirkt, Ereignis—Gewährende; 2. Seiendheit—Washeit: während, dauernd, ἀεί [essence of *be*[ing]: *bey*[ing], distinction; 'coming to pass' of *be*[ing] [is]

the silent*[187] voice that attunes us to the terror of the abyss. In reference to this essential dread, admittedly, if we wilfully abandon the train of thought of the lecture, we absolve dread from having any voice [Stimme] in the determinate mood related to no-thing; we are then left with dread as an isolated "feeling," one among others in that familiar assortment of psychologically observed mental states that we can distinguish and analyze. Making the easy distinction [Unterschied] between "above" and "below" our theme allows us to allocate the "moods" to the class of those that are uplifting or of those that are debasing. The avid hunting for "types" and "countertypes" of "feelings," for the bounty of varieties and subspecies of these "types," is never over. Therefore such anthropological probing [Beforschen] of man always remains beyond any possibility of following the train of thought of the lecture, since beyond attentiveness to the voice of be[ing], it goes into the attuning [Stimmen] that goes beyond this voice by means of which man by nature [in seinem Wesen] learns to experience *be*[ing] in no-thing.

Readiness for dread is "saying 'Yes'" to the urgency to fulfill the highest claim by which man's essence is affected. Called by the voice of *be*[ing], only man in the midst of all be-ing experiences the wonder of all wonders: *that* be-ing *is*.[188] Therefore what in its essence is called to the truth of *be*[ing] is always

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ambiguous: 1. eventuality, not effected by be-ing, eventuality—granting; 2. be-ingness—whatness; granting, lasting (going on), (for)ever]." (NWM 306) *Be*[ing] brings about be-ing or makes be-ing comes to pass without itself coming to pass or bringing itself about.

185 *Fifth edition (1949): "im Sinne von Seyn [in the sense of *bey*[ing]." (NWM 306)

186 †In the fourth edition (1943), we read instead of 'niemals': "niemals aber [though nowhere]." (NWM 306)

187 *Fifth edition (1949): "'das Sein' (Austrag) als die lautlose Stimme, die Stimme der Stille ['*be*[ing]' (deliverance) as the inaudible voice, the voice of silence]." (NWM 306) The sense is that something issues forth, is brought to term (images of parturition are unmistakable here), something is come to terms with.

188 Variant: Man experiences *that* there is be-ing, not no-thing. This becomes the basis for

determined in an essential way along with it.[189] Ready courage for essential dread guarantees the mysterious possibility of the experience of *be*[ing]. For close to essential dread, as the terror of the unfathomable, dwells reticence. It sheds light on and looks after every quarter of man's nature in which he is at home with what is lasting.

On the other hand, "anxiety" about dread can be an aberration, so that it misjudges the simple relationships [Bezüge] that are of the essence of dread. What would all courage avail, if it did not find its permanent bearings in the experience of essential dread? To the degree that we disparage essential dread and that in it which sheds light on the relation of *be*[ing] to man, we degrade the essence of courage. But this makes it possible to endure no-thing [das Nichts auszustehen].[190] In the abyss of terror courage recognizes the scarcely traversed scope [Raum] of *be*[ing] in light of which [aus dessen Lichtung] any [kind of] be-ing first comes back to that in which it is and can be. The lecture neither pursues a "philosophy of dread" nor seeks to give the false impression of an "heroic philosophy." It only thinks that which Western thinking has from the start continued to work out but nonetheless has forgotten as what is to be thought [das zu Denkende]: *be*[ing]. But *be*[ing] is not a product of thinking. To be sure, essential thinking is rather an eventuality of *be*[ing].

But now of necessity the scarcely articulated question comes up, whether there is the any law as yet about the truth of this thinking since it only follows the thinking that "logic" constitutes with its forms and rules. Why is this term placed in quotation marks in the lecture? In order to suggest that "logic" is only *one* explanation [Auslegung] of the nature of thinking and in fact, as the term suggests, one that is based

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consciousness, which is after the fact of having come to know [bewußt] about be-ing.

189 "Der also in seinem Wesen in die Wahrheit des Seins Gerufene ist daher stets in einer wesentlichen Weise gestimmt." (NWM 307) Variants: What is called (for) in the truth of *be*[ing] is always in tune with it in an essential way. The truth of *be*[ing] and what is, in truth, called for are in tune with each other there.

190 Or: . . . to stand up to, bear, put up with no-thing.

on an experience of *be*[ing] already attained by Greek thought. This suspicion about "logic," which is attested to by the logical consistency of logistics, comes of knowledge about that thinking which has its source, not in consideration of the objectivity [Gegenständlichkeit] of be-ing but of the experience of the truth of *be*[ing]. The most exact thinking is never the strictest thinking, if the strictness has its essence elsewhere than in the kind of exertion with which knowledge actually maintains its relationship with what is essential to be-ing. Exact thinking merely commits itself to figuring (out) [Rechnen] be-ing and serves that exclusively.

All figuring (out) sees to it that the countable [Zählbar] is worked out in what is counted up [Gezählten] in order to make use of it in the next accounting [Zählung].[191] Figuring (out) does not allow anything but the countable to come up. All that counts is what it counts. What is counted up each time safeguards the progress of the counting [Zählen]. This progressively uses up all of them [Zahlen] and is itself a continual self-consumption. The working out of the account [Rechnung] of be-ing counts as an explanation of its *be*[ing]. In advance, figuring out makes use of all be-ing as the countable and uses up what is counted up in the accounting. This consuming use of be-ing gives away the all-consuming character of figuring [things] out. Only because number is reproducible *ad infinitum*, and this indiscriminately, whether in the direction of greater or less, can it conceal the all-consuming nature of figuring [things out] behind its products and lend the appearance of productivity to calculative [rechnenden] thinking, while in an anticipatory way and not primarily in its later results, it in fact already makes all be-ing out to be important only in the form of what is available and consumable. Calculative thinking is entirely under the compulsion to master everything by means of the logical consistency of its procedures. It cannot tell that

191 Heidegger's figure his is one of both arithmetic computation and control. Everything that is subjected to calculative thinking must be divisible into discrete discernible units and accountable to the operator of the computer. The explanations that calculative thinking produce must add up. Every problem has a solution. Everything must be submitted to analysis, understood, figured out. The results must be measurable, fixed to standards or measurement and expressible in statistical terms.

everything calculable [alles Berechenbare] in figuring, before its being variously worked out as sums and products, is already a whole whose unity, of course, belongs to what is incalculable [Unberechenbar], which eludes the clutches of figuring and its uncanniness. However, what has everywhere and always already closed itself off from any suggestion of calculation [Berechnung] and is nevertheless at any given moment always closer to man in its puzzling indecipherability than any instance of be-ing, which equips it and which it has in mind, [this] can from time to time attune the essence of man to a kind of thinking whose truth no "logic" can apprehend. Thinking whose thought does not only not figure out but is determined above all by what is other than be-ing we call essential thinking.*[192] Instead of accounting for [rechnen] be-ing with be-ing, it expends itself [verschwendet es sich] in *be*[ing] for the sake of the truth of *be*[ing].[193] Such thinking answers to the demands of *be*[ing] when man puts his historical nature in the hands of what is quite simply the only necessity, which does not coerce as it compels but creates a need that is fulfilled in the freedom of giving something up [Opfer].[194] The need is for the truth of *be*[ing] to come to be aware of [gewahrt wird] what may happen to man and all be-ing. Relieved of all compulsion [Zwang] because it arises from the abyss of freedom, giving [something] up is the price of expending the essence of man on safeguarding the truth of *be*[ing] for be-ing. In giving something up a hidden thanks comes to pass [ereignet sich] which alone pays respect to graciousness [Huld], as what *be*[ing] itself has

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192 *Fifth edition (1949): "*Rechnen*: Herrschaft -- Bestellung; *Denken*: Gelassenheit in die Vereignung des Brauchs -- Ent-sagen [*figuring out*: control -- order; *thinking*: the composure of acclimation to custom -- re-nouncing]." (NWM 309)

193 "Statt mit dem Seienden auf das Seiende zu rechnen, verschwendet es sich im Sein für die Wahrheit des Seins." (NWM 309)

194 "Diese Denken antwortet dem Anspruch des Seins, indem der Mensch sein geschichtliches Wesen dem Einfachen der einzigen Notwendigkeit überantwortet, die nicht nötigt, indem sie zwingt, sondern die Not schafft, die sich in der Freiheit des Opfers erfüllt." (NWM 309) Variant: . . . just as man puts his historical essence in the hands of all that is of the essence . . .. 'Opfer' is, of course, sacrifice, but the basic meaning of sacrifice is giving up something.

conveyed [übereignet hat] to the essence of man in thinking, in order in harmony [Bezug] with *be*[ing] to assume guardianship over *be*[ing]. The opening thought†[195] is the echo [Widerhall] of the grace of *be*[ing] in which what is unique sheds light on itself and lets†[196] it come to pass*[197] that be-ing is [daß Seiende ist]. This echo is the human answer to the words [das Wort] of the silent voice of *be*[ing]. Thinking's answer†[198] is the origin [Ursprung] of human words, words which let language as the enunciation of words [das Wort] be put into words [in die Wörter] for the first time. Were there not at times [zuzeiten] [such] hidden thinking†[199] at the heart of the nature of historical man [im Wesensgrunde des geschichtlichen

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195 †In the fourth edition (1943), we read instead of "Das anfängliche Denken . . .": "'Das ursprüngliche Danken [Original thanking] . . ." (NWM 310). The note implies something in the ellipsis; but is it thanks *for*, thanks *to*, thanks *of*? The sense of 'anfänglich' applied here casts a wide net. It is thinking that sets one on the right track (steadying, consoling), begins ever anew (in which one is always a beginner), is innovative (starts something new), is unusual (exceptional, maybe even "excessive"). All of these attributes apply, of course, to Heidegger's way of thinking and writing. "The opening thought" sounds like the opening tone(s) of a piece of music.

196 †In the fourth edition (1943), we read instead of " . . . in der sich das Einzige lichtet und sich ereignen läßt:": " . . . in der es sich lichtet und das Einzige sich ereignen läßt [in which it sheds light on itself and lets the unique come to pass]:." (NWM 310)

197 *Fifth edition (1949): "Ereignis [eventuality]." (NWM 310)

198 †In the fourth edition (1943), we read instead of "Die Antwort des Denkens . . .": "Die sprachlose Antwort des Dankens im Opfer [the speechless reply of thanks in sacrifice]. . .." (NWM 310)

199 †In the fourth edition (1943), we read instead of "Denken": "Danken [thanking]." (NWM 310)

Menschen], he would therefore never be capable of thanking†[200], assuming that in any consideration [Bedenken] and every expression of thanks [Bedanken]†[201] there still has to be thought [Denken] of what originally thinks the truth of *be*[ing]. But how else could humanity ever find its way to original thinking, were it not that the grace of *be*[ing] grants man, by way of an outspoken harmony with it, the nobility of poverty in which the freedom of giving something up hides the riches of its nature. Giving something up is taking leave of be-ing in order to be on the way to safeguarding the grace of *be*[ing]. By being busy and accomplishing things, giving something up can be prepared for and helped along but never fulfilled by be-ing. Carrying it out originates in the urgency with which every historical human being [Mensch] acts (essential thinking is also action [Handeln]), which sustains the existence attained in its safeguarding the dignity of *be*[ing]. This urgency is an equanimity [Gleichmut] that will not let itself fight the hidden readiness to let go of what is of the essence of every giving something up. Giving something up is inherently [heimisch] in the nature of the eventuality as which *be*[ing] has man caught up*[202] in speaking on behalf of the truth. Therefore giving something up doesn't put up with any calculation [Verrechnung] by means of which it always just becomes resolved [verrechnet][203] to a profit or loss, whether its aims are

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200 †In the fourth edition (1943), we read instead of "Danken": "Denken [thinking]." (NWM 310)

201 †In the fourth edition (1943), we read instead of "Bedanken": "Andenken [recalling (memory)]." (NWM 310)

202 " . . . als welches das Sein den Menschen für die Wahrheit des Seins in den Anspruch nimmt." (NWM 311) Man is then engrossed in speaking on behalf of the truth. Here Heidegger plays on 'ansprechen' (to speak to), the colloquial expression 'in den Anspruch nehmen' (to claim) , and 'ansprechend' (mutually attracting, in this case *be*[ing] and man).

*Fifth edition (1949): "er-eignet, braucht [comes to pass, uses]." (NWM 311)

203 Or: balanced, as the books are balanced by an accountant, or miscalculated.

to be set low or high. Such calculating [Verrechnen] disfigures the essence of giving something up.[204] The search [Sucht] for aims befuddles the clarity of dread-ready reticence about giving up oneself which has something deathless about it.

Thinking of[205] *be*[ing] seeks no support from be-ing.[206] Essential thinking pays attention to the hesitant indication [Zeichen] by the incalculable and recognizes in it the arrival from time immemorial of the inevitable. Such thinking is attentive to the truth of *be*[ing] and in this way helps along the *be*[ing] of truth that finds in its place [Stätte] in historical humanity [geschichtlichen Menschentum]. Such help effects no results because it has no need of effect [Wirkung]. Essential thinking is of avail simply as an urgency of existence, in that something of it breaks out [entzundet sich] without being able either to control it or even know anything of it.

Obedient to the voice of *be*[ing], thinking looks to it for those words which the truth of *be*[ing] finds becoming in language.[207] Only when the language of historical man is put into words has it reached its own proper depth [ist sie im Lot]. But if it has found its depth, then it is given a sign of the guarantee of the silent voice of a hidden source. Thinking of *be*[ing] minds [hütet][208] words and fulfills its destiny in

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204 The point is that giving something up or sacrificing (in this case be-ing) does not mean losing anything.

205 Both the objective and subjective genitive are in play here.

206 "Das Denken des Seins sucht im Seiende keinen Anhalt." (NWM 311) Variant: Thinking of *be*[ing] hasn't got a clue about be-ing.

207 "Das Denken, gehorsam der Stimme des Seins, sucht diesem das Wort, aus dem die Wahrheit des Seins zur Sprache kommt." (NWM 311) These are words that fit or are appropriate to the truth of *be*[ing].

208 Variant: Thinking of *be*[ing] oversees or looks after words . . ..

such watchfulness [Behutsamkeit]. It is care for usage [Sorge für den Sprachgebrauch].[209] From a long held silence [Sprachlosigkeit] and careful clarification[210] of what is shed light on in that realm come the pronouncements [Sagen] of the thinker. The naming [Nennen] of the poet has the same genealogy [Herkunft]. Because, however, what is equivalent [das Gleiche] is equivalent only as what has been distinguished [das Verschiedene], the poet and the thinker are equals, and although poetry and thinking are most clearly alike in their carefulness with words, both are at the same time the most widely separated in nature. The thinker utters *be*[ing].[211] The poet names the holy. †[212]Admittedly, thought from the nature of *be*[ing], the way poetry and thanking and thinking refer to each other and at the same time are distinct must remain open. Presumably, thanking and poetry come in different ways of thinking in its inception, making use of it but without letting themselves become something for thought.

We no doubt know a lot about the relation of philosophy and creative writing [Poesie].[213] But we know

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209 Heidegger's use of 'Sorge' here carries the additional message of his sorrow about the way language was being used.

210 Clearing up of meanings of words in light of what thinks *be*[ing].

211 "Der Denker sagt das Sein. Der Dichter nennt das Heilige." (NWM 312) Variant: The thinker announces / heralds *be*[ing].

212 †The remaining lines of this paragraph were added to the postscript beginning with the fifth edition (1949) of the lecture. The *Gesamtausgabe* edition of *Wegmarken* does not note this addition.

213 The distinction being made is between 'der Dichter' (the classical poet), 'das Dichten' (what the classical poet does) and 'die Dichtung' (poetry or literature in general), on the one hand, and between 'das Dichten' (writing poetry) and 'die Poesie' ("creative writing"), on the other. As Heidegger had already noticed by 1949, philosophy and literary criticism were mingling in continental intellectual life.

nothing about the dialogue between the poet and the thinker, who "live nearby on distant peaks."[214]

One of essential sites [Wesensstätte] of silence is dread, in the sense of the terror in which the abyss of no-thing is the right thing for [stimmt] man. No-thing as the other than [das Andere][215] be-ing is the veil of *be*[ing].*[216] In *be*[ing], every venture [Geschick] of be-ing has already been consummated at its inception.

The final poetry of the last poet at the beginning of Greek civilization, *Oedipus at Colonus* by Sophocles, closes with words that unknowingly return to [zurückwendet] the hidden history of this people and preserve access to the unknown truth of *be*[ing]:

> ἀλλ᾽ ἀποπαύετε μηδ᾽ ἐπι πλείω
> θρῆνον ἐγείρετὲ
> πάντως γὰρ ἔχει τάδε χῦρος.
>
> Doch laßt nun ab, und nie mehr förderhin,
> Die Klage wecket auf;

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214 The quotation is from Friedrich Hölderlin's "Patmos," lines 11-12. " . . . und die Liebsten / Nah wohnen, ermattend auf / Getrenntesten Bergen." See the bi-lingual edition of *Hölderlin. Poems and Fragments*, translated by Michael Hamburger (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), pp. 463-464.

215 Variant: None other than be-ing is the veil of *be*[ing].

216 *Fifth edition (1949): "Das Nichts: das Nichtende, d.h. als Unterschied, ist als Schleier des Seins, d.h. des Seyns im Sinne des Erignisses des Brauchs [no-thing: what is nihilating, that is, as difference, is the veil of *be*[ing], that is, of *bey*[ing] in the sense of the eventuality of what is customary]." (NWM 312) One more neologism ('das Nichtende') is added at this point to the basic terms of the lecture.

Überallhin nämlich hält bei sich das Ereignete
    verwahrt ein Entscheid der Vollendung.[217]

But let it out now, and nevermore
raise complaint;
that is, always hold to what has gone before
    [that safeguards a decision of fulfillment].

217 In Scene 8, lines 1777-79, the Chorus speaks the last lines of the play:

Now let the weeping cease;
Let no one mourn again.
These things are in the hands of God.

Sophocles, Volume 1*, in The Complete Greek Tragedies, translated by Robert Fitzgerald, edited by* David Grene and Richard Lattimore (1941) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 155. Heidegger adds a line to Sophocles' text!

TRANSLATOR'S CONCLUDING NOTE

I am convinced that all philosophy must be read in the language of its composition and every translation should be published in a bi-lingual edition. The Loeb Classical Series has done this with the Greek and Latin authors. It should be a matter of course for philosophy to be presented in the same way. Only a few of Heidegger's texts have been brought into English in bi-lingual editions.[218] Here I want add a few remarks explaining a number of the translations I have made of key terms. These remarks summarize what has already been said in notes accompanying the translation.

'Das Seiende' (be-ing) is a substantive of the present participle 'seiend' (being) of the verb 'sein' (to be). It is hyphenated to bring out the root 'sei- ' (be-). It means "effective actuality" in contrast to what is not to be found at all ('das Nichts'). It does not mean an entity or entities in Heidegger's texts. There are many kinds of effective actuality, including human beings (Menschen). 'Das Seiende' is generic term. On one occasion, Heidegger uses the term 'seienden Menschen', which is translated "actual human beings."

'Das Seiendheit' (be-ingness) is the character of effective actuality.

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218 Apart from several letters and some verse, the following essays appear in bi-lingual editions: *The Concept of Time* (1992) London: Blackwell (William McNeill); "Messkirch's Seventh Centennial," in *Listening* (Dubuque) 8, 1973, 41-57 (Thomas Sheehan); *The Essence of Reasons* (1969) Evanston: Northwestern University Press (Terrence Malick); *Identity and Difference* (1969) New York: Harper and Row (Joan Stambaugh); "The Pathway," in *Listening* (Dubuque) 8, 1973, 32-39. Reprinted in Thomas Sheehan (ed.), *Heidegger. The Man and the Thinker* (1981) Chicago: Precedent Publishing Company, 69-72 (Thomas Sheehan); "*The Question of Being* (1958) New York: Twayne (William Kluback and Jean T. Wilde); *What Is Philosophy?* (1958) New York: Twayne, 1989 (William Kluback and Jean T. Wilde).

'Das Sein' (*be*[ing]) is a substantive of the infinitive of the verb 'sein' (be). It is read "*be*[ing]" but pronounced "be". The root is italicized for emphasis and to distinguish it from the infinitive when it is used in the text. All of Heidegger's efforts are directed toward clarifying the meaning of *be*[ing].

For me, a pivotal term in understanding Heidegger is 'das Seiende', which he uses in his unique way beginning with *Being and Time* (1927). It could be still understood to mean "entity" in the lecture "Der Begriff der Zeit [The Concept of Time]" (1924). Once it is clear what Heidegger means to do with the term, how it works for him, the question about the 'Sinn' (sense) of *be*[ing] comes into focus. *Be*[ing] is that by which any kind of be-ing emerges.

'Das Dasein' (existence) is the name for the unique status of the human kind of be-ing. On occasion, it is translated "*being* there" to stress the singularity of existence in every instance.

'Die Existenz' (life) is the name for the particular situation of 'das Dasein' (existence) among the variety of kinds of be-ing. It refers to what a biography recounts, not physiological viability. Heidegger had abandoned the word 'Leben' and talk of "human life" by the time he wrote *Being and Time*. His view is decidedly not in the tradition of Dilthey's *Lebensphilosophie*.

'Das Nichts' (no-thing) is the complete absence of any and all 'Seiende'. See the long note accompanying the lecture on the various nugatory terms Heidegger employs in his study of no-thing.

The earlier translations of the lecture and the essays that introduce and comment on it have not made clear what is a straightforward argument about the sense of talking about no-thing. There is no need to speak about "the Nothing" as though to confuse it with the experience of dread that provides access to it and turn it into something to be dreaded. Capitalizing the word 'being' when translating 'das Sein' does not shed any light on Heidegger's efforts to understand the sheer possibility that the root of the infinitive expresses. There is also no need to defer translation of 'das Dasein'. It means "existence," if existence is understood as the unique status of the human kind of be-ing. The lines in the introduction which contrast

human be-ing with every other kind of be-ing, all of which "are" in some way, are crucial here. Rocks, trees, horses, angels and God are, but none of them exist. Only the human kind of be-ing exists.

'Die Gegenwart' (present) is the present of a particular instance of human be-ing, you or I. It is also the German word for the present tense in grammar. In two illuminating passages in the lecture, Heidegger refers to the present of the existence of someone who is loved, which reveals the sense of any be-ing at all, and the present of no-thing, which dread reveals. It is also the German word for the present tense in grammar.

The verb 'wesen' (to come to be) is used to express the change from no-thing to be-ing. Each kind of be-ing comes to be (west) in its own way. For the human kind of be-ing, that means existing. Thus our essence (Wesen), what we come to be, is existence (Dasein). Everything else *is* and that, too, in various ways.

'Das Ereignis' is the eventuality, the possible reality, that there will any kind of be-ing will come to pass (ereignen). This rests with *be*[ing], which must be construed in a way that more primordial than the distinction between ontology and linguistics. Of course, without language there would not be 'ontology' and 'language'. The 'sei- ' (be-) that requires the human kind of be-ing, existence, to sound at all is, then, for Heidegger neither linguistic nor ontological, neither a matter of naming (what the poet does) or uttering (what the thinker does), but more basic than both. Metaphysics is the human inclination (Kant) to delve into their common ground.

Be[ing] and utterance are like two tone which need each other to produce harmony. The image from musical is unmistakable in Heidegger. The "voice of *be*[ing]" is silent without language, which mediates between *be*[ing] and existence. Existence would not speak, were it not for *be*[ing]. Together *be*[ing] and existence make two-part harmony, the characteristic sound of the Middle Ages. *Be*[ing] is the "ground bass" and language is the melody. Only existence sings with *be*[ing]. *Be*[ing] may also be construed as the grammatical middle voice which is lacking in modern languages. Heidegger tries to recover it in

German; hence his interest in etymology. We are prompted to do the same in English, thanks to Heidegger's efforts.

After the return [Kehre] to thinking only about *be*[ing] following his excursus into analysis of existence, Heidegger focuses on the eventuality [Ereignis] of *be*[ing] in his renewed study. He is no less concerned with how there can be any kind of be-ing whatsoever, given the alternative. The alternative would not have come into play, of course, with that eventuality.